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Lurline Matson Roth

MATSON AND ROTH FAMILY HISTORY: A LOVE OF SHIPS, HORSES, AND GARDENS

An Interview Conducted by
Suzanne B. Riess
in 1980, 1981

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Mrs. William P. Roth

TABLE OF CONTENTS -- Lurline Matson Roth

INTERVIEW HISTORY i

I FAMILY 1
Father, William Matson 1
Mother, Lillie Low 8
The Trips Down to the Islands 11
Lurline and Her Parents 14
Mother: Leeside, Lessons 14
Father: The Business 17
The Character of Captain Matson 19
Growing Up 23
Country, Vacations, Houses 23
Horses 26
Consular Responsibilities 27
Education, Study in Paris 27

II MARRIAGE 30
William P. Roth 30
Courtship and Job 30
The Roth Family 32
The Fair, The Honeymoon 33
The Airplane Business: Amelia Earhart 34
The Twins 36
Woodside 37
"Why Worry" 37
Buying Filoli 38

III HORSES 42

IV AN INTERVIEW ON MATSON HISTORY, WITH KARL KORTUM PRESENT 61

V RED CROSS WORK, AND OTHER INTERESTS 91
Red Cross Volunteer Chairman 91
War and Postwar: Stables, Servants 99
Other Shipping Families 102
Other Volunteer Activities 103
William Matson Roth 107

VI FILOLI'S GARDENS 112
The Gardeners 112
Miss Isabella Worn 114
Toichi Domoto 119
Leslie Thiringer 121
Fruit, Flowers, Vegetables, Picnics 122
Other Gardens 124

VII A TRIP TO FILOLI 126
The Garden Design 128
In the Gardens 132
In the House 138
The Parties: Tony Duquette 140
United Nations Site Consideration 142
Concluding Remarks 144

TAPE GUIDE 146

A TALK TO THE DOCENTS by Lurline Roth Coonan 147

APPENDICES 162

AN INTERVIEW WITH TOICHI DOMOTO 223

INDEX 267

INTERVIEW HISTORY

This oral history with Mrs. William P. Roth was conceived as a series of interviews on the history of Filoli, the Roths' home in Woodside, California; on shipping, from the Matson Navigation Company point of view; and on horse shows. One or all of these aspects of Mrs. Roth's life--the house and garden, now in the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the heritage of shipping, through her father, William Matson, and her husband, William Roth, and the activities on the horse show/horse breeding circuits--are what the name Lurline Matson Roth means to many.

Beyond these major subjects, the interviews are about a girl growing up on both sides of the San Francisco Bay, and in Hilo, and on shipboard, about her education and career interests, about being wife and mother and volunteer, and about taking further community leadership roles, especially with the Red Cross in wartime.

Mrs. Roth was extremely modest in the face of the ego-stretching possibilities of being an oral-history interviewee. She did not easily say "I did..." this or that. For a wider view of her life at Filoli the reader will want especially to read her daughter Lurline Roth Coonan's talk to the docents appended, and the interview with horticulturist Toichi Domoto, and the notes sent by designer Tony Duquette. The shipping interview with Mrs. Roth and maritime historian Karl Kortum is supplemented by appended reprints on shipping history, and biographical material on Captain Matson.

The interviews took place September 22, 30, and October 6, 20, 1980, on November 13, with Mr. Kortum, and on December 17, and then after time out for the holidays, a cruise and a trip to her home in Hilo, the interviewing resumed with two meetings, May 4 and 11, 1981. The attached interview with Mr. Domoto was done on May 26, 1981.

The setting for the interviews was Mrs. Roth's study, a bright, pretty room with beautiful, fragrant bowls of flowers, a fireplace, books, horse portraits, and two walls of windows with views of the Thomas Church-designed garden that came with the Hillsborough house that Mrs. Roth moved to when she left Woodside in 1975. In October, when I arrived, Mrs. Roth was making her social plans for the horse show, in December she was writing her Christmas cards, in May putting together the Red Cross's part in the benefit opening of Maxwell's Plum in Ghirardelli Square--an historically and architecturally significant and beautiful property saved and developed by the Roths. The November meeting where we talked Matson history with Karl Kortum in the Roth offices in Ghirardelli Square was followed by an excellent Chinese lunch at Kan's. Mrs. Roth knows good food--my arrival sometimes interrupted menu-planning, and the opened cookbooks were inspiring. Once, as the result of a misunderstanding at the fish market, Mrs. Roth was having to face a lot of caviar for lunch, and leftovers for dinner.

Successors to the birds that Lurline Coonan mentions in her story of growing up at Filoli were singing through the interviews in Hillsborough, a hallway away, but in good voice. The poodles were right there, small and fiercely fond of their owner, and a lot less so of the interviewer.

For the final interview, Mrs. Roth and I took a day to go down to Filoli. We drove on familiar roads, home to a beloved place. We walked in the gardens, saw and met docents and volunteers preparing for the spring visits, and talked with Hadley Osborn, the executive director. Somehow we managed to get locked in (we thought) the library at Filoli where we were interviewing, and after a lot of banging and bemusement, our hard push opened the heavy doors. It was the only time that Filoli seemed perhaps too large. Otherwise, it is very personal and accessible for all its grand and glorious scale.

The interviews, after being transcribed, were edited in the Regional Oral History Office, and checked by Mrs. Roth in the fall of 1981. Attenti was given to finding good illustrations, pictures and appendices, and the family scrapbook, from which most of the pictures were reproduced, yielded a great number of negatives valued by The Bancroft Library for their artis merit--Arnold Genthe studio portraits--and their historic merit--interiors clothing, people.

But the picture and the sound I most wish to have reproduced for pos- terity was the night of October 29, 1980, at the Grand National Horse Sho when Mrs. Roth's four-year-old, Mountain Storm, showed splendidly, and he owner stepped out in the light of that vast and exciting place to present a cup, and was introduced, to standing ovation, as the champion horsewom and person she is.

In preparing for these interviews I have had the help of Karl Kortum Chief Curator, Maritime Museum, San Francisco; Mai Arbegast, landscape architect and horticultural consultant, on the Filoli Board of Trustees; Suzanne Caster, San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle Librarian; Mr. Charl Regal; Mr. Robert Richardson; Mrs. Ted Robbins; and the Filoli Center staf and the librarians of the Strybing Arboretum. I am grateful to all of th

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Suzanne B. Riess
Senior Editor

February 1982
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MRS. WILLIAM P. ROTH

I FAMILY

[Interview 1: September 22, 1980]##

Father, William Matson

Riess: When were you born, 1890 or 1891?

Roth: Eighteen-ninety is on my passport, so that is when I was born--September 3rd.

Riess: It appears as 1891 occasionally.

Roth: Yes, it does and the reason is because during the fire we all lost our papers. I always thought that Mother made a mistake. But in any case, I'm 90 and that makes it 1890.

Riess: Where were you born?

Roth: In San Francisco on Broadway Street.

Riess: At home?

Roth: At home; no doubt at home in those days.

Riess: Was life comfortable for your family at that point?

Roth: Life was always comfortable for my father. He made life comfortable. If he was short of money, he found it somehow. He was always comfortable. It was really something in his character. He would go into the office, when the office first started, and say, "I want $200 for the week-end."

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 146.

Roth: The treasurer, Mr. McCarty would say, "But Captain Matson, you haven't got $200." He'd say, "Just give me $200." And he'd get it. [laughs] He didn't steal it. He'd get it; it was there.

Riess: Do you think this is typical?

Roth: Very typical of him. Mother had to make up--it was hard for her because sometimes she was [left] a little short.

Riess: What do you know about your father's parents?

Roth: Nothing, nothing. We know absolutely nothing excepting they were killed, both together, in a factory fire, I think, or an accident. They were both killed on the same day.

Riess: They worked in that factory?

Roth: They must have. He was born in Lysekil, which is not far from Göteburg. It's where the king used to go on his summer vacation.

Riess: Was it on the coast or inland?

Roth: A little inland.

Ries: A hunting preserve?

Roth: Agriculture.

Riess: I wonder what the factory would have been then.

Roth: Matches, I think.

Riess: A dangerous environment, I guess.

Roth: A very close friend of mine who is related to the king went there and tried to find my father's grave--his family's grave--but they couldn't because in those days he could have been the "son of Mat." Matson was a name they just gave him, you see. In those days, you were the "son of Mat" or you were the "son of Peter."

Riess: So it wouldn't be traceable.

Roth: It was not traceable. It was just the year before it was traceable. The next year it was traceable.

Riess: No church records?

Roth: No church records, although they knew of the accident.

Roth: My father never went back to Sweden. In the beginning, he didn't have the money to go. Later on, he got too busy and never went. But he always wanted to go back.

Riess: I wondered, because he got back to Europe to buy boats. He bought boats in London.

Roth: Yes, he got back to London but never went to Sweden.

Riess: He must have recalled aunts and uncles.

Roth: No, he didn't remember anyone. He was only ten when he had left and he remembered he wasn't very fond of his aunt. [chuckles]

Riess: Were there brothers and sisters?

Roth: He may have had brothers and sisters, but I doubt it. I don't think he had. He never talked of any brothers and sisters. Then later on when he was successful, I don't think he was so anxious to look them up. [laughs] He might have found quite a few if he went back. I did go back and I went to see where he was born which is a lovely part of the country, very lovely.

Riess: Had he become a legend over there?

Roth: I don't think so, I don't think so. He was made, you know, the Swedish consul general, so Sweden really recognized him. He has a decoration too. I have it still.

Riess: Did he become an American citizen?

Roth: Yes, right away. As soon as he could learn enough English, he became an American citizen.

Riess: Was that necessary for what he was doing?

Roth: Yes, to get his captain's license.

He loved this country because he felt this country had done a lot for him, from a poor little boy to success.

Riess: Could he have had this kind of success in Sweden?

Roth: Oh, he could have. I suppose he could have. I think he was a worker and a thinker. He was always ahead of himself, going from one thing to the next thing that was just a little bit more advanced.

Riess: Therein lies a risk.

Roth: He always took risks.

Riess: You said that he was orphaned at ten, but he came to this country at fourteen. There were four years in there.

Roth: I think he came to the west coast when he was fourteen. He started in sailing from Sweden to New York on a ship called the Aurora. Then, about four years later, he took something around the Horn.

Riess: What kind of work was he doing in New York?

Roth: Oh, he was on the ship. He went back and forth from Sweden to New York. His work as a little boy would be just running errands I imagine.

Riess: Would they have had more than one such little boy on board ship?

Roth: Oh, I think probably a couple of little boys and that's when he spoke of the cat-o-nine tails, which I couldn't find in the dictionary.

Riess: It was like being a slave then.

Roth: Well, they were in those days. They really were.

Riess: Would there be some person on the ship who would be assigned to look out for his welfare?

Roth: The first mate probably.

Riess: To see that he didn't come to harm?

Roth: I don't think they cared so much in those days if they came to harm. It was tough.

Riess: So a little boy would be sent up the rigging to do things?

Roth: Yes, to do errands; run down and get something for the captain, I suppose. He always said he ran as fast as he could and he found out that if he ran fast, they always thought he knew what he was doing. [chuckles]

Riess: Do you think that the rigours of that experience made him feel that he would never treat anyone like that on his ships, or did he come out of that feeling that that was a good education?

Roth: It's a thought, because maybe all of those hardships gave him that sweet nature that he had when he was able to take care of himself.

Riess: I hear that he was a good captain and kind.

Roth: Oh, yes, he was. He was good to everybody. He'd give his shirt to anybody. He was always giving everything away. It was just natural. It was part of him. I came across an article the other day about a

Roth: Hawaiian that he had helped. It was in the Honolulu paper. (I gave it to my daughter.) He had arthritis and he [Matson] gave him clothes all his life. He was always giving clothes to everybody--everybody in Hilo--all these old Hawaiians that would help him. He [Matson] couldn't swim. Imagine a sailor that couldn't swim! Somebody was always saving him! [laughs] He never could swim. They were the ones that were always getting all the suits because they saved him someplace!

Riess: How come he had to be saved? Was he washed overboard?

Roth: Oh, no, you know there is always an undertow swimming. So he got into a lot of trouble!

Riess: I want to talk about Hawaii and the Hawaiians but I don't want to get quite that far ahead. Was your father a religious man?

Roth: Yes, I have his Bible. He came with his Bible and at ten years old to leave with your Bible (it was his own Bible that he had) showed that he had had a religious bringing-up. He always went to church.

Riess: What church did he go to when he was here?

Roth: Lutheran. Then Mother was Presbyterian, so he later went to the Presbyterian church.

Riess: Would he have church services on his ships too?

Roth: Well, when ships got farther along. In the beginning they didn't have anybody to give church services. I guess maybe the captain had something.

Riess: When you are out at sea the elements are so terrific that maybe you are inclined to put yourself in the hands of God.

Roth: I think that easily could be because when you think of the big ships we go down in now, and think of those little things that we used to sail in--

Riess: Did he have any fear when he set sail?

Roth: No, no, he had no fear at all. No fear. That's one thing, he never had any fear.

Riess: Do you recall your father talking about his New York days?

Roth: No, I don't think so. He, of course, got really started in the business through his friendship with the Spreckelses.

Riess: Why did he decide to pick up and head west?

Roth: Oh, the idea of adventure. Everybody was thinking of the gold rush in those days. Of course, he went right into shipping.

Riess: Was the gold rush in his thinking originally when he headed out here do you think?

Roth: No, I don't think so. But I think everybody was heading here. He was always back in Sweden, one trip, and then back to New York. So I think the idea was to get away and make his own life--which is logical.

Riess: I guess he probably had to go around the Horn several more times before the canal was built.

Roth: Oh, he only went once around the Horn.

Riess: From then on he would travel back and forth by train across the country?

Roth: Oh, yes, by then. But that is many years later.

Riess: When he got around here he didn't go to the gold fields. Was he the kind of person that could not live out of sight of the sea, et cetera?

Roth: I think he loved the sea, because it was the time when he could have gotten into the gold fields and maybe he would have been more successful.

Riess: [laughs] More successful, Mrs. Roth?

Roth: Well, you always can be more successful. I think he just loved the sea too much.

Riess: There were Captains Johnson and This and That, but Captain Matson was the one who was very successful.

Roth: They were all Swedish or Norwegian. I believe the other Captain Matson was Norwegian.

Riess: A lot of the water front was Swedish.

Roth: I think they were all Swedish and Norwegian. If you look at the list of the captains of the ships, they were all Johnsons, Petersons--they all had "son" at the end.

Riess: Did they speak Swedish among themselves?

Roth: Yes. My father didn't speak Swedish. He forgot his Swedish.

Riess: Were they of the same generation that he was?

Roth: I think he was younger. I think they were older really. I'm sure they were.

Riess: The first really important contact for him on the water front was Mr. Spreckels? He was German, wasn't he?

Roth: Yes, he had his lovely yacht which was called the Lurline and he was asked to sail this yacht on week-ends when the Spreckels would have guests. That's how he made the acquaintance of people who had money that could help him--and they all helped him. Nobody lost any money from my father. He made money for everybody.

Riess: Was this Claus Spreckels?

Roth: It was Claus Spreckels's son. The original Claus Spreckels had John D., Adolph, Rudolph, and A.B., all sons. But Rudolph had nothing to do with the yacht.

Riess: Had they already made a fortune in sugar?

Roth: You're ahead of yourself. Sugar only just started then.

Riess: How had they made money?

Roth: They inherited it from Claus.*

I know that they loaned my father the money for his first ship as he had little of his own. By then he had saved money and with the money that he had borrowed from the Spreckelses he was able to build the Lurline. [a brigantine, first voyage, 1887]

Riess: There are a couple of stories of what Lurline means. What is your understanding?

Roth: There is only one meaning. It's Lorelei. It has to come from that. If you read about the opera, it tells how it is the Lurline on the Rhine who lures the sailors to the shore. It is spelled L-o-r-l-e-i sometimes; Lorlei.

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*Claus Spreckels (1828-1908) "...came from Hanover, Germany, to the U.S. as a penniless immigrant to work as a grocery boy...became interested in sugar refining...by shrewd business methods came to control all of San Francisco's refineries and established the state's sugar-beet industry." (James D. Hart, A Companion to California, Oxford University Press, 1978)

Mother, Lillie Low

Roth: After he married, my father never went to sea as a captain.

Riess: Was that your mother's wish?

Roth: No, I was born then and I guess he just went into bigger things, more ships. The Enterprise was his first steamer. I know that I have been on every single ship on the list [laughter] because Mother and I always had to make two trips anyway to the Islands every year, from the time I was born. So that's quite a few.

Riess: Why did you have to?

Roth: My father wished it.

Riess: So that he would have you with him as much as possible?

Roth: Yes, that's it. He had to go on business so often himself. It isn't like the old days. Now we are there in a few hours and then it took twelve days to get there.

Riess: In some of the reports I've read he would demand that the boat get in within ten days.

Roth: Yes, they would once in awhile.

My mother made the first flag for the ship, the first time they had the ship's flag. I remember Mother making it on board, getting a lot of flags and cutting them up and making the same flag they have now, the hem and the center [contrasting] and the stars around, each star for one ship. Of course, in the beginning there weren't many ships!

Riess: I'd like to hear about her. He met her in the Islands?

Roth: He met her on board ship. She was on the Lurline going down to teach school at Hakalau Plantation.* She had been teaching up here. I think she was just seventeen.

Riess: She was teaching in San Francisco?

Roth: No, across the bay in Alameda County. As a matter of fact, it was at Sunol. The children were mostly older than she was. It was a country school.

In those days in Hawaii on the plantation, most every plantation had a very good tutor for their children and the children of their office employees. So it was like a little private school.

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*See "Captain Matson and the Matsonia" by Erna Fergusson, appended.

Riess: The plantation owners would be Caucasian?

Roth: Oh, yes, all Scottish.

Riess: But then the children of the workers would be--

Roth: Not of the workers, of the office employees, and they would have a very good teacher for their children because there weren't that many schools. Of course, the children were out there on the plantation which was out of the city of Hilo. So Mother went down to teach at Hakalau.

At the Volcano House I was so excited the other day. There was [in] a glass case the list of the guests way back and here was my mother's name--Lillie B. Low. I screamed at the top of my voice when I saw that! I was so excited. I think that one of the reasons that it is exhibited is that it was on the same page as Mark Twain. [laughs] She doesn't get all of the credit!

Riess: Where had she gotten her education?

Roth: That I have no idea. I have no idea. My mother was born in Brooklyn and apparently her mother and father were divorced when she was very young because she came west with her father and lived with him.

Riess: That is unusual.

Roth: It is. It is very unusual. I never heard of her mother, never saw her.

Riess: So your mother came around the Horn too then.

Roth: No, no, she came by train. Her father's name was James Reed Low. He spelled his name L-o-w, and all of his family spelt the name L-o-w-e because they were very Scottish and they just couldn't stand not to have an "e."

Riess: Well, Lillie Low could be a Chinese name.

Roth: It could be. Her name was L-i-l-l-i-e. But where she had her education--as a matter of fact, I don't even know where she and her father lived.

Riess: Sunol was very much the country.

Roth: I remember when the little schoolhouse was there years ago. When I used to drive up to Stockton, I would pass that school house.

Riess: Do you think she lived with families out there?

Roth: She must have, yes. She must have. I don't think you lived by yourself in those days.

[On this first trip to Hawaii, to go to Hakalau Plantation, the ship was the Lurline and] my father put the ship on the rocks. She had to go to shore with a rope tied around her waist and naturally she was the first one off. He got her off first.

Riess: Had he already spotted her?

Roth: He had spotted her and I think everything was pretty well set then.

Riess: Do you mean on that twelve-day voyage?

Roth: [laughs] I think so, I think so. I think she only taught for a year there and came back and got married.

Riess: What did she look like?

Roth: She was very pretty because her father was a very handsome man. He had golden hair. My mother had golden hair too, but her father had hair that was golden when he was seventy years old. It was amazing.

Riess: This was a romantic voyage.

Roth: Oh, it was.

Riess: Your father was a good deal older.

Roth: He was sixteen or eighteen years older.

Her father was an engineer on the Morning Star, which I believe is the first ship that went to the South Seas. He was the engineer on that trip. He had written the most wonderful log and it's lost. It was stolen somehow. I cannot find it. Historically it would be quite valuable because I believe the Morning Star was the first American ship that went to the South Seas.

Riess: By the South Seas do you mean Tahiti?

Roth: I mean further than Tahiti--Fiji.

Riess: Had he been a ship's engineer in the east?

Roth: That I don't know. I know very little about the family. Mother never saw her family because her father just felt that he was different from the family and he just didn't seem to get along.

Riess: You don't know whether she had sisters or brothers back east?

Roth: She had no sisters. She had a brother, James Reed Low.

Riess: Did James come out with your mother and your grandfather?

Roth: Yes, and he went to school here and then went to the Islands and died in Vladivostok, Russia. He was working for Matson over there. They sent him on a project and he died there quite young of pneumonia.

Riess: What was Matson doing in Vladivostok?

Roth: I think they were looking into--I really don't know.

Riess: When did it happen?

Roth: In the twenties. He married there. He married this Scottish girl there, Barbara. She had come to Vladivostok from England to tutor for a Russian family.

Riess: A far-flung family!

Roth: I know one of the cousins was scalped by the Apaches on the way home after he had bought my mother a doll for Christmas. Imagine! That was in New Mexico and she and her father were staying there on their way west. The uncle went to town to buy her a doll and was scalped by the Indians--the Apaches--on his way home and the doll never arrived. They found him and the doll. So he must have been a good man.

The Trips Down to the Islands

Riess: What were your father's feelings about the Islands and the islanders?

Roth: He loved the Islands and he loved the people there. In those days, the plantation people were mostly all Scots.

Riess: You wouldn't have had much contact with the Asians and the Hawaiians?

Roth: No, he had contact with the Hawaiians too, because in those days it was before they really imported so much outside labor and they were all Hawaiians doing the work, all of the pure Hawaiians. After that, they imported Portuguese and [those] from different places.

Riess: Did he learn to speak the Hawaiian language?

Roth: No, he didn't.

Riess: He didn't need to deal with them directly anyway?

Roth: Oh, no, you didn't. They weren't the heads of businesses.

Riess: I probably should re-read my Michener's Hawaii, but I wondered--

Roth: That won't give you the true history.

Riess: When did they become real factors in business dealings in Hawaii?

Roth: I don't think they ever did. I don't think they ever did.

Riess: Not even through intermarriage?

Roth: Oh, through intermarriage, yes. But the kings and the queens really didn't have too much to do with the business of the country. Sugar is the big business. The missionaries came in and took that over. So you're dealing with the missionaries.

Riess: In Hilo he was dealing with the Scots who were raising sugar, and was there also coffee in Hilo?

Roth: In the very beginning, he was doing everything because he was one of the first ships to go down there. So he did everything--needles, pins.

Riess: These were the things he was bringing to them?

Roth: Yes.

Riess: I have read he was, in fact, his own contractor. He picked up things at this end--

Roth: Yes, he did it all himself when he came back, and went back with all these orders. Then later, naturally they had stores and they did their own buying and you went just for sugar. But in the beginning it was everything.

Riess: He and your mother were married in 1889. That was the end of her teaching career, and you were born the next year. Why were there no more children?

Roth: That I don't know.

Riess: Was she a good sailor?

Roth: Terrible. She was the worst sailor in the world. Once we went out and they had to put the ship back and take her off, she was so sick, just getting out by the Farallones.

Riess: Is that always the worst part of it?

Roth: It's always choppy there. She was a terrible sailor.

In the old days, they used to put the mules on the decks in stalls and we always had a front room on the ship. I don't know whether it was supposed to be the best or the worst, but anyway, those mules would get their heads in the window and they were always so seasick! [laughter] It used to really upset my mother to look and see a mule's head in the window, he was so sick. Of course, they are not actively sick, but they drooled, and it was awful.

Riess: Didn't you tell me when we met earlier that occasionally you would be tied up, on board ship?

Roth: Yes, when my mother was seasick and in a deck chair. I had a long rope so I could run about the deck and play and if I should fall over, they could haul me in.

Riess: Were there steamships by 1890?

Roth: No, no, not that early. There were steamships to Honolulu, but not to Hilo. Hilo still had the sailing ships, and you just floated along, rocking from side to side.

Riess: The trip down. Is "down" the vernacular?

Roth: Down and up.

Riess: The trip down I understand you just sort of run before the wind, don't you?

Roth: It's easier than coming up.

My father used to take me out on the spar, sliding out, when I was maybe six. I'd slide right out to the edge.

Riess: What was holding you?

Roth: Nothing; just on the mast. My father's hand only, he'd be beside me.

Riess: Were you scared?

Roth: No, that was a treat! I thought that was the best thing in the world. It was my big treat.

Riess: When you were lose, you had the run of the ship?

Roth: Oh, yes, and there were always a few passengers. They had seven or eight.

Riess: You all had this forward cabin that was theoretically best.

Roth: With the mules heads in the windows.

Riess: Were there other women on board the ship?

Roth: A couple of couples because those early ships only had a couple of rooms, maybe six. It might be a group of twelve in those days and everybody was seasick then because nobody had those good pills.

Riess: Were those people going out to the Islands as tourists or was that business traffic?

Roth: Mostly business because I wouldn't think that the trip was a pleasure trip in those days.

Riess: It wasn't until the boats were faster and more stable that pleasure--

Roth: That it became a pleasure. In the first place, in those early days your cooks weren't French chefs.

Riess: What do you remember of the food on the ships going down?

Roth: Oh, I don't remember it actually, but it was adequate I'm sure. But not special.

Often when we went over I'd go to school over there (one of these plantation schools) and we'd stay maybe a month or two.

Lurline and Her Parents##

Mother: Leeside, Lessons

Roth: I went to Sunday school in the morning, stayed for church, then in the evening we sang hymns after dinner. That's not what happened at every one of the plantations, I'm sure, but where I stayed, that's what we had to do and it was a long day.

Riess: Was your mother tutoring you in between?

Roth: That she did when we went to Leeside. I told you we had a place near Mills College. My father had bronchitis.

Riess: I think I would just like to step back. Where on Broadway was the house where you were born?

EARLY YEARS

Clockwise:

Lurline at Leeside

Captain & Mrs. Matson with Lurline

Mrs. Matson, Red Cross Head

Family home, 1918 Jackson Street

Captain Matson

Roth: Right next to Dr. [Herbert C.] Moffitt between Octavia and Gough. We lived in rented houses in San Francisco.

Riess: Why was that?

Roth: I guess we didn't have any money to buy a house. We had a rented house always and we moved around quite a bit. Then when he got bronchitis, and the doctor said he should get away over the weekends, he bought the place near Mills College, Leeside, and it was I'd say three miles from Mills College. We came back and forth. We would rent in the winter and then go back and spend the summer.

Riess: How old were you when you went to Leeside?

Roth: Oh, I was little; six probably. We had that until he died. He loved it there.

Riess: Better than being in urban San Francisco?

Roth: Yes, he loved Leeside.

Riess: Was your mother at home in the country too?

Roth: Yes, she loved it.

I remember having tea with Mrs. Mills. I was so excited, so afraid I'd spill my tea! [laughter] Oh, it was exciting.

Riess: What would you imagine your mother's life was like for those first seven years of bringing you up in San Francisco? Could she put down roots and develop close friendships, or was she sort of transient?

Roth: I would say transient because my father in the meantime is moving on and meeting different people and Mother had to follow naturally and make these new friends. It was always new friends because the business grew and as the business grew, you made new friends. It wasn't easy for her, but she did it. She was wonderful about that. But I know it wasn't easy. She was so much younger than my father that it was hard.

Riess: How were you brought up?

Roth: [with emphasis] Strict, strict.

Riess: You say that with passion!

Roth: Oh, really strict, really strict. If a boy came to call on me and it started to be half past eleven, my father would drop a shoe up above. I would hear it.

Riess: Half past eleven is pretty late.

Roth: In those days it was very late. I was supposed to get rid of him then. Oh, he was strict.

Riess: You talked about having tea with Susan Mills. Susan and Cyrus Mills had an Hawaiian connection.

Roth: Oh, really?

Riess: Yes, Cyrus Mills was president of Punahou. Mrs. Mills was reportedly a dashing horsewoman.

Roth: Oh, yes, that I knew. But I was maybe five or six; I was pretty small then at the time. She must have died when I must have been twelve.

Riess: You were visiting her because you were neighbors, rather than old acquaintances?

Roth: Yes, we were neighbors, my mother. I was just a little girl brought along, but I remember her.

Riess: Do you remember her collection of teapots?

Roth: Yes, yes, that I remember. She was such a dear person, she really was.

Riess: She had a kind of soiree?

Roth: Yes, used to, I think, every once a week.

Riess: Did you learn the ladylike arts--to sew, etc.?

Roth: Yes, sewing, piano. My mother wanted me to play the violin. That I didn't start. The piano I did. Singing I loved. I continued in that. I went to Paris and studied a little bit there. I always loved singing and I had a somewhat nice voice. Then art.

Riess: Who did you take art lessons from?

Roth: I went to the Art Institute two years I think. That I enjoyed very much because I didn't go to college.

Riess: In San Francisco did you go to private schools?

Roth: In the beginning I was at Leeside, so when I started school I should have started in the first grade. But it was crowded and I had to start in the second, which was very difficult for a country girl. But I made it. Then I went to Miss Hamlin's later, in Pacific Heights.

Riess: You were commuting across the Bay to go to school?

Roth: No, no. When I was at Leeside, Mother taught me. In other words, I didn't have kindergarten. Most children start now about three years old. I was eight years before I went to a city school.

Father: The Business

Riess: What sort of dances and social life did you have?

Roth: Naturally, you acquired many friends and you went to dances and parties. But my father was very demanding of me. He really liked me home most every night if possible.

Riess: He wanted your company?

Roth: He did. As a matter of fact, he was absolutely devoted to me. It was really amazing; he wasn't like most fathers; he thought that anything he did, I could do. If he went to the opera, no reason why I shouldn't go to the opera. Mother would say, "Tickets are so expensive and she's so young." I should go if he wanted to go; I should go with him. He was that way. I was at the opera the night of the earthquake to hear Caruso. I went with my father--everything he did.

And he discussed his business with me. Every night when he came home, he discussed business. He didn't discuss it as much with my mother. It always hurt her feelings a bit.

Riess: Would he actually change the subject if your mother came around?

Roth: No, not necessarily, but it was always me that he wanted to discuss things with. They'd ring up from the office and say, "What is your father going to do on such and such a thing? Is it going to be yes or no?" Because the office knew he always talked it over with me.

Riess: Were you supposed to keep it confidential?

Roth: I could use my own judgment.

Riess: When you say "discuss," discuss is supposed to be two-way. Did you have some comments on things?

Roth: I was very smart. I didn't make too many comments and I think probably that is why he enjoyed it. Mother would have made a comment. She would naturally have said, "I might do it this way," but of course

Roth: I didn't and I think it was his way of releasing troubles that he had and thoughts and then having nobody say anything against them. He got it out of his system.

Riess: I hope it didn't worry you.

Roth: No, no, it didn't worry me at all. Not at all. As a matter of fact, it was a period when we were always--as I say, we always had enough, there was always money, but [chuckles] it was a little bit short, you see. There was one period that my mother really got tired of my father saying the bills were expensive every month. Mother would say, "But you want to entertain all the time. You can't entertain all the time and not have expensive bills."

So she said, "I'm going to turn the household over to Lurline to run," and she did. She turned it over to me and I was about sixteen I guess at the time. I was terrified. I ran the house then and I sure worked, because when the bills came in and my father said, "Lurline, they're a little high," I'd say, "That's what you spent."

It really kind of taught him a lesson, I think, because then when I turned it back to Mother I think he was better about things.

Riess: Did you have help at that time?

Roth: Oh, yes. We always had a cook and a maid. I think we always had a maid, but we always had a cook. Most people did in those days.

Riess: Chinese?

Roth: We had Chinese, Swedish.

Riess: How did your mother occupy herself during the day?

Roth: Mother liked to paint. She always took painting lessons. She did quite a lot of charity work.

Riess: Who was your father entertaining?

Roth: Just friends, just friends.

Riess: Who were his particularly good friends that you can recall?

Roth: I can't remember.

Riess: The horsy ones or the sea captains?

Roth: No, not the horsy ones; mostly business friends of his.

Riess: Do you remember eating particularly lavishly and well?

Roth: Oh, yes, but everybody did. We weren't different from anyone else. There were big luncheons. You had so much more than you have nowadays.

Riess: Was it common to entertain at home rather than at a hotel?

Roth: Oh, yes. In those days almost everyone who came from the Islands who were friends of ours, stayed with us. Nobody went to a hotel. All the children of all my father's business acquaintances in the Islands, they always stayed with us on their way to Harvard or Yale. They never thought of going to hotels.

Riess: On their way to Harvard or Yale rather than Stanford?

Roth: Oh, yes, all those boys from the Islands went to Harvard or Yale, or Cornell was quite a favorite college.

Riess: Is that because that was where their fathers had been educated?

Roth: They were mostly all eastern people from Boston.

Riess: By then you were firmly fixed in one house?

Roth: Not until my father finally bought a house--and never took Mother to see it! He just came home and said, "I bought you a house." She didn't have anything to say, he had the house. He bought a great big house. It is now the Swedish consulate. It's on Jackson, 1918 Jackson. My father died there. Then the house was rebuilt.

Riess: He sounds not very thoughtful of his wife.

Roth: Yes, he was. He adored her. He couldn't have been kinder, but strict I'd say. I always felt that Mother could have had more fun. Oh, she liked to dance and if they went to a party he wouldn't stay that late to dance, and Mother liked fun. I don't think she had too much fun. She worked hard.

The Character of Captain Matson

Riess: I have read about his trips to southern California and the development of the oil fields. How much was he around home?

Roth: Oh, he was there, he was there. He'd go down to the oil fields and be there only two days maybe, just a weekend.

Riess: Did he ever go out drinking with the boys?

Roth: No, he didn't drink.

Riess: He didn't drink at all?

Roth: Oh, yes, he had one drink every night, but that was it, and wine. He never took more than one drink.

Riess: Drinking was often a problem with seagoing men, wasn't it?

Roth: Oh, I think so. It probably was the reason that he didn't drink.

Riess: Do you think he tried to keep his ships more sober than other ships?

Roth: He wouldn't allow his captains to drink while they were at sea. I remember the Matson captains wouldn't drink while they were at sea. A very good idea because sometimes some captains have gotten in trouble.

Riess: Why did your father become the giant of the business and others didn't?

Roth: Because he worked hard and he went forward and he had vision. You have to have vision.

Riess: It's almost as if you get on a treadmill though.

Roth: One thing leads to another. The oil came and it was part of the ships and the ships used the oil. Of course, [oil] is where he made the money; not the ships. The oil, he had vision with that. We always laughed at him because he used to drive home at Leeside and when we put some oil on the road he would drive home and then say "what a good country smell!" Well, it wasn't a country smell at all. [laughs] It was that good oil smell that he liked!

Riess: It sounds like he wasn't afraid to use the power that money had.

Roth: He had dreams at night and his dreams would come true. This was really remarkable.

Riess: What is an example?

Roth: An example of one dream was when he dreamt he'd be thrown out of the rig and he was. It was amazing. His dreams came true when he had these nightmares. It was funny. I have never known anyone like that.

Riess: Can you think of other examples?

Roth: No, I can't think of anything else. Mother knew most of them because he would tell her. But there were many.

Physically he was very strong.

Riess: All of the reports talk about him as "barrel-chested."

Roth: Barrel-chested, right. He was driving all of the directors of the company from someplace in Hawaii, I think with four horses. The horses ran away and they were all thrown out of the rig. It went right over his chest and everybody else had broken arms and legs and ribs. But he didn't even have a broken rib.

Riess: With the long day that he had, when did he get up in the morning?

Roth: Not too early. He ate breakfast at eight.

Riess: Would your mother get up to see everybody off?

Roth: Yes.

Riess: Did he have a place where he stopped to get the familiar red carnation for his buttonhole?

Roth: Yes. When we were in the country, he had it in the country in the home. I don't know where he got it, but he always had one, red or white; generally red. He loved red.

Riess: Is your interest in flowers a heritage from him or your mother?

Roth: I think maybe more from Mother, but he loved flowers. He didn't know anything about them, but he loved them.

Riess: I wanted to get a sense of his routine. Did he stop at the barber, did he spend much time with the tailor, et cetera?

Roth: No, I don't imagine that he spent much time at the tailor's. Of course, further on he went to the club for lunch. But in the old days they ate down on California Street right near the office because in the early days they went by horse and carriage. Lawson's Stable was at the bottom of California Street.

Riess: In the early days, wouldn't he have had to get up very early just to compete for business?

Roth: Oh, maybe <u>then</u>, but I don't remember then.

Riess: When you say he ate at the club, I know he belonged to a number of clubs.

Roth: He ate at the Pacific Union Club. That's later, much later. In the early days I don't suppose there was a club. I'm sure there wasn't.

Riess: What are your impressions--your own observations--of how he fit in? He was a successful man of business, but still he was different from the rest of the people in the Pacific Union Club. Or was he? Maybe in that day there were a lot of rugged individuals.

Roth: By the time that there was a Pacific Union Club, he could fit in.

Riess: The rough edges--

Roth: [chuckles] The rough edges were gone, and his edges weren't that rough. His history is rough, but the edges weren't rough and maybe because his history was so rough, it refines the rest. I always had that feeling that he was so sensitive to the things that were a little different in him that it was easy for him to acquire them, if you see what I mean. He knew the things he was missing and there weren't too many.

Riess: Was he interested in other financial investments?

Roth: There were some gold mines. You always had to have gold mines. [laughs] He had gold mines in Mexico. One gold mine, he was almost killed and then he really got out of gold mines.

Riess: He was washing gold?

Roth: No, he was riding across a stream and a Mexican told him not to do it. But my father did not like to be told not to do anything if he decided to do it. So he wanted to get home and the only way he could get home quickly was to get over this river. So he did it and the river knocked the horse down and they were washed down about a half a mile and he was nearly killed.

Riess: I wonder if he had a dream about that one.

Roth: He probably did.

Riess: I take it he didn't learn anything from his dreams.

Roth: No, nothing that he could avoid anyway. Nothing he could avoid. No, he never wanted to be told not to do things. In other words, he didn't want to feel that he couldn't do it.

In the oil fields this very famous Mexican had a beautiful horse and my father went down on one of his weekends and the Mexican said, "Captain Matson, you're going to ride my horse, but you must not get on from the ground. You must get on from the porch." My father was a beautiful rider and to tell him to get on from the porch was something he wouldn't do. So he got on from the ground and the horse threw him right over his head and he broke his arm! [laughs] He didn't like to be told, you see.

Roth: He came home--I never will forget it--he had the broken arm. We had automobiles then, I think. Anyway, I took him to the hospital. He was to go in and have an anesthetic and have it set. They wheeled somebody by him and he said, "Where is that man going?" The nurse said, "Oh, he's going in to have his leg set." My father said, "I don't want to have any anesthetic." So he wouldn't take any anesthetic. He just had them set it.

Riess: He never would say afterwards, "I should have listened to that man?"

Roth: Oh, no. [chuckles] Oh, no, he wouldn't say that. I'm sure he felt it.

Riess: Would he condone that kind of shall we call it "pig-headedness" in you?

Roth: Well, it never came up.

Riess: He might have said to you, "Lurline, you will go to Europe or you will do this or you will do that." Were there ever confrontations where you would say, "No, I will not do that?"

Roth: No. I never said no to my father. He was too good to me. I couldn't say no. I wouldn't say no. I didn't always think he was right because I know that other girls had--I wasn't allowed to smoke. A lot of things I wasn't allowed to do. But you get used to it.

Growing Up

Country, Vacations, Houses

Riess: It sounds like earlier you were a bit of a tomboy.

Roth: I was a little bit. I was always out of doors.

Riess: Then eventually did you "come out" in society?

Roth: Oh, yes, they had a party. In those days, you went to the Greenway Ball at the Fairmont. That was the big coming out party. Everybody came out there.

Riess: Your recollections of life at Leeside?

Roth: Oh, wonderful days! I loved the country. I loved the horses, and as a child I'd follow the man plowing the fields with my dog and think I was plowing, too.

Riess: The place in the country had land attached to it?

Roth: Oh, yes. Next time you come down I'll bring some pictures of it from an old book. It was just the worst-looking old house, a farm house.

Riess: Was it really being farmed?

Roth: We had cows (milk cows) and horses.

Riess: But during the winter when you weren't there--

Roth: We had somebody there.

Riess: Did you raise these things in order to keep the horses in hay, basically?

Roth: Yes, that's it--noncommercial.

Riess: Were the cows for your own milk?

Roth: Our own milk and cream and buttermilk.

Riess: What kind of dogs did you have?

Roth: Shepherds. Collies. My dog's name was Jessie. Old Jessie sure suffered with me!

Riess: Why?

Roth: Well, her tail used to get caught in the tricycle. [laughter]

[Interview 2: October 6, 1980]##

Roth: I liked adventure, to see the world, I guess. So I would go with my dog from Leeside on a trip somewhere down the road. Then when I would see the family looking for me, I'd dive into the ditch and hide in the grass--there were little ditches on the side of the road--and hold the dog down so he wouldn't bark.

Riess: Then would you turn yourself in or would you be discovered?

Roth: Discovered because then I would be too frightened to turn myself in! [laughter]

Riess: Who was the disciplinarian in the family?

Roth: My mother. My father was very easy going as far as I was concerned. I could do anything mostly.

Riess: Did your father tell sea stories?

Roth: No, he didn't. As a matter of fact, he really put his early life behind him and started new. He didn't discuss his early days at all. That's why I know very little about them. By then I think he just wanted to build up a new life and he wanted it better and he put that all behind him. It was a new life he started when he bought his first ship. I think he just wanted everything to be different. I think he wanted to forget the trip around the Horn and working on the scow and losing his mother and father and all that part of his early life.

Riess: What did you do for family outings other than when you were going all the way to the Islands?

Roth: Go to a spring or a hotel over the weekend, like Byron Springs, and maybe go to Monterey for a weekend. Then he always had me take friends. I always had another girl. There would be a couple of boys too.

Riess: Really?

Roth: Oh, yes, and we'd have a good time.

Riess: It sounds like surrounding you with pleasure was one of the things that gave him--

Roth: It gave him pleasure. He loved young people.

Riess: Do you have memories of the old Palace Hotel?

Roth: Oh, yes, yes. We used to go from Leeside over to the theater and spend the night at the Palace.

Riess: Leeside was a summer home and you rented places in town, but it still made sense to stay at the Palace?

Roth: We only rented during the winter for six months or something.

Riess: When I think of a life that unrooted, it makes me very uneasy.

Roth: It made my mother very uneasy. She said she was sick and tired of houses with the "Northwest Passage." All those old houses had a long hallway that went the whole length of the house and Mother always said, "I can't stand to have another house with that Northwest Passage!" [laughter]

Riess: She would wish to have settled down in one house.

Roth: Yes, but when my father finally bought a house, he didn't even take Mother with him. He saw one that he liked and he bought it and just came home and said, "I bought a house."

Horses

Riess: You said when we first talked that your father was horse-poor. Your mother disapproved, and so your father secreted these horses around the East Bay.

Roth: Every captain of a ship had a horse to take care of. And I don't know what he had them for! But he did have good horses, good race horses, Standardbred, trotting. And in those days they had amateur driving, which they don't have now.

You needed a good pair of horses, for driving a rig. And my mother needed a horse, and my father needed a horse. The race horses were different. You needed a trainer for them.

Riess: What happened to all those horses when he died? Did you inherit them?

Roth: No, he'd been sick for a long enough time that he'd gotten rid of his race horses, and most of his horses, because of course the automobile came along.

Riess: What stable did he use in the city?

Roth: In the city he used Lawson's at the foot of California Street. It was near the office. As a matter of fact, he had one horse that used to go from the office to the stable by itself. It wasn't very far, about two blocks I think. It used to go right home to roost.

Riess: Do you think your father knew James Ben Ali Haggin who was from Kentucky and a great horse person?

Roth: No.

Riess: How about Lloyd Tevis?

Roth: No, he wasn't born when my father was alive. It might be Lloyd Tevis's father. I don't think my father knew him.

Riess: Senator Latham who had stables in Menlo Park?

Roth: No, he didn't. We didn't know anyone in Menlo Park in those days. We went across the Bay.

Riess: Who were your good friends who would come out on outings or weekends with you?

Roth: Jane (Mrs. Alfred) Swinerton, Marie Kales of Alameda, Maidie McMahon. Her grandfather, Captain Nelson, was a steamship man who lived right down below Mills College on Seminary Avenue which was a street that led to Mills.

Consular Responsibilities

Riess: What was your father's territory as consul?

Roth: It was the entire west coast, and as he didn't speak Swedish he hired someone and paid the salary himeself for a vice consul, and the vice consul did all the work. Most of the work we had was that when anyone came from Sweden, they always wanted to stay with us.

Riess: Did that mean an interesting group of people?

Roth: [chuckles] A couple of times it was interesting and sometimes it wasn't.

Riess: When they came to stay did you have a role as "the consul's daughter" to show them the town?

Roth: Yes, yes, and that wasn't always such fun. Several very, very interesting friends we made through those visits, but it wasn't always that easy.

Riess: What did showing them the town amount to?

Roth: I completely forget at this time. I really wouldn't remember. Probably a drive to the country to show them some of the country.

Riess: Would you have a tea or something and invite a lot of people in to meet them?

Roth: No, we did not do that.

Riess: Did you celebrate the Swedish holidays?

Roth: No, no Swedish [holidays], though the Swedish Christmas service is so beautiful, with the candles in the hair.

Riess: Did you do that?

Roth: No. [laughs] I never had candles in my hair!

Education, Study in Paris

Roth: At that period I had no education but my mother's teaching and maybe kindergarten because I never went to school until I went into the second grade on account of Leeside.

Riess: The irregularity of all that didn't bother you?

Roth: Well, I wasn't at the head of the class, let's put it that way--which disappointed my father a great deal. Later on I did better but in the beginning, the first year when I went to Pacific Heights, I was next to last and I really thought I had accomplished something, but my father didn't seem to feel that way about it! [laughs] He was very upset. But I had just started school and I hadn't been with a lot of children before and I was bashful, and nearsighted. In those days, you sat in the back of the room and you couldn't see and things were different then. But I got to be the head of the class, which satisfied my father!

Riess: When you were at the [San Francisco] Art Institute, you were living at home?

Roth: Yes, I was at home. Then I went to Paris, and studied singing six months there. I stayed at a French pension. We spoke French. There were four English girls who were there and I was the only American. I enjoyed that.

Riess: Was it serious, this studying of music?

Roth: Yes, I was serious with my singing. I would have liked to have been an opera star really. My mother sang. She had a lovely voice. I always sang and loved it.

Riess: Would your family have thought that would be all right for you to have become a performer?

Roth: I don't think so, and I didn't have the disposition to do it. I am fundamentally lazy, I think. I always sort of had the habit of putting things over on my teachers and so I don't think that you can be serious with that tendency. But I always think of it because I loved it. That's why I hate losing my voice now. I can't sing a thing.

Riess: You were in Paris at a very interesting time.

Roth: It was, but I wasn't that interested. I was pretty busy and had a lesson every day. I would have to go to it and I would have to go across Paris and then study a bit at home.

Riess: You would have been expected back at the pension?

Roth: Oh, yes, oh, yes. They expected me back.

Riess: What about lingering in a café where there would be artists?

Roth: I didn't. I didn't know enough to I don't think. I went right back.

Riess: Your parents weren't concerned about you being off on your own?

Roth: No, they weren't.

Riess: I take it you didn't visit Gertrude Stein when you were in Paris!

Roth: No, I didn't.

Riess: You must forgive me. I am curious about those times and those places.

Roth: Well, living in the French pension you just probably don't hear about Stein.

Then I continued my lessons when I came home. I took singing lessons even after I was married.

Riess: Who were your teachers here?

Roth: I think his name was Molyneux; I think that was his name, but I'm not sure.

Riess: You said you weren't disciplined, but it sounds like you must have put in a couple of hours on scales and things like that.

Roth: Oh, yes, I had to study, of course. In the meantime, I was also keeping up my languages. I was busy.

II MARRIAGE

William P. Roth

Courtship and Job

Riess: Were you also being courted then by William Roth?

Roth: I didn't meet Bill until about 1912, I think. Then we were engaged right away.

Riess: During the singing period, you were just waiting to see what was going to happen with your life?

Roth: Yes, that's it--and it happened!

Riess: Tell me a little bit about how it happened and where you met him.

Roth: I met him in Hawaii the first night we arrived one trip and that was it. The first night.

Riess: That will never make a novel, to just say that was it!

Roth: Well, that was it, that was it! We were married. My father didn't want me to get married. I think he just wanted to keep me home really. I'm sure he did because I waited two years before I was married.

Riess: Did he put actual obstacles in the way?

Roth: Oh, yes, any obstacle he could. Bill was in the brokerage business and he didn't like brokers. So he didn't like that business. I wasn't to be married to anybody in the brokerage business. [laughter]

Riess: Bill asked your father for your hand?

Lurline Matson Roth

Lurline and Bill Roth

The twins' debut at Filoli, 1939

Billy, Lurline, and Berenice, 1922

Roth: Yes, and he said to wait a year. So we waited another year.

Riess: Then in the meantime were negotiations made for Bill to come into the shipping business?

Roth: No, my father was hoping it would break off [laughs], no negotiations. But at the end of the year then he had to give in. Then Bill sold his business and moved here and became the lowest in the company, which is the secretary of Matson, which was very difficult for him, because he was a very popular extra man in Honolulu and everybody adored him, and then to come here where he knew really no one and start at the bottom when you had had your own business was a little difficult. I know he was, I'm sure, lonesome sometimes until he made friends, which he did easily. He was the type that always had so many friends, and then landed in a new company and not a member of a club or anything. It was hard for him.

Riess: He must have had connections here because of Stanford.

Roth: Oh, yes.

Riess: In that year of courtship--

Roth: It was no courtship! I wasn't supposed to see him or to write, for a year. Oh, my father was strict. Of course, we didn't pay much attention to that.

Riess: It's not that your father had picked somebody else for you who was more appropriate.

Roth: No, he hadn't. No, I think he just wanted to keep me in the house.

Riess: Do you remember when you were courting what your life plans were, what you'd like to achieve or how?

Roth: Naturally, Bill wanted to achieve, to move up in the company, but my father unfortunately died two years after we were married. So he didn't have an opportunity to move up. Then Mr. Tenney became president of Matson, and when he died he [Bill] was still very young to become president of a big company. But he was made president and did a really wonderful job with Matson. He had lots of vision and [brought in] the tourist business and he really made good. My father would have been proud in the end of him.

Riess: Was your father reconciled to it?

Roth: Oh, yes. As soon as we were married it was all right.

Riess: You had grandchildren for him to see before he died.

Roth: I was married in '14 and Bill was born in '16. The twins were born in 1920, four years later. Bill was just a year old when my father died. So he had the fun of seeing him. That it was a boy was good, it was fun.

Riess: I wondered if Bill has any memories of that grandfather, but he couldn't have.

Roth: But he has wonderful memories of his grandmother because she took him on several trips to Europe when he was a little boy. She was good with children.

Riess: After your father died, did she live on in that house?

Roth: No, she built a new house on the same grounds and eventually gave the new house to us and built another house for herself. So that's why now there are two houses, but one house was built two years after the other, 1918 and 1916 Jackson. Everyone thinks that the two houses were built together, but one was built two years later. The original house was too big. She wanted a small house.

Riess: Was your early married life on a budget or did you have help?

Roth: Oh, I had help through my father.

Riess: Did you have a nurse for the baby and that kind of thing?

Roth: Not for Bill, but I did when the twins came. They were premature. As a matter of fact, I had to have a trained nurse for a long time because they were really a problem. No, we had to be pretty careful because Bill had sold his business and when the children came he was still secretary and that's not a very big salary.

The Roth Family

Riess: Was he being supported by his family at all?

Roth: Oh, no.

Riess: Why had he come to the Islands?

Roth: I can't tell you.

Riess: Tell me a little bit about his family.

Roth: He had four sisters (I'm not sure, but I think so) and his mother was alive when I was married. His father had passed on. His father came from Austria. As a matter of fact, there is a town over there called Roth.

Roth: He was not the oldest in his family, he had a brother. His one youngest sister he put through college; because he went to college he put [through] his youngest sister, Alice. She is Mrs. Frank Thompson and the only one alive now. She married an attorney in Hawaii.

Riess: I know that your husband was always a fine tennis player.

Roth: He was the amateur champion at Stanford I believe. He loved tennis. He played golf later, but tennis was his first love.

Riess: How about riding?

Roth: No, he didn't ride. Once in awhile he'd go on a trail trip with me at Woodside, but mostly under protest, though.

Bill really loved Filoli. He walked in the garden every morning before he went to work, and every night when he came home. And you know, Filoli is big, but it's not too big for two people to live in. For me alone, it was terrible, but for two people you're not lonely. You sit in the back room, and the fire's going, and you're part of the house. When you're there alone and you walk upstairs and pass seven bedrooms to your bedroom, it's lonely.

The Fair, The Honeymoon

Riess: Before you moved to Woodside, where did you stable your horses in the city?

Roth: Hmm, good question.

Riess: Golden Gate Park?

Roth: Yes, I guess I must have had them at Golden Gate Park probably because often in the old days I used to take a horse to Honolulu if we were going to be there a month, so I could ride down there.

Riess: Surely they had horses in Honolulu.

Roth: Yes, but you like your own horse.

Riess: I'm sure they weren't fond of traveling across the seas with you.

Roth: It didn't hurt them. [looking at pictures] Here are the twins. Those horses they have belonged to Mr. Macy Willits and he had twin daughters, and the horses were sisters.

That's my first horse.

Riess: [reading] "Winner of Pacific Fair, 1915. Mavis." Mavis was the horse's name?

Roth: Yes. My father bought that horse [Mavis]. I wouldn't have been able to pay for it because it came from Kentucky, and one of the best riders from Kentucky came out to ride it. So the picture is taken out by the stable there.

And the reason I remember that 1915 Fair is that Bill and I were living at Mother and Father's house because we'd both been sick, and life had become very complicated, so we moved back to Mother's. And one night, at about a quarter to one in the morning, the telephone rang and it was in my father's room, and he answered it, and it was for Bill Roth, and it was a woman's voice. She asked to speak to Bill, and of course my father got a little upset. [laughter] We hadn't been married too long.

So the next morning at breakfast, when Bill came down, my father said, "Bill, some woman rang you up at quarter of one last night!" Well, who do you suppose it was? Alice Longworth, and she was out at a party down at the Fair and somebody mentioned that Billy Roth was married. "Oh," she said, "I love Billy Roth, I must call him."

Well, it didn't make a hit with my father!

Riess: Did you go on a honeymoon when you were married?

Roth: Yes, we went to Canada. And I got sciatica. The groom had to take the bride home. I had sciatica and couldn't get out of bed. And I suffered with sciatica all those early years of my marriage.

Riess: Did it have something to do with the riding?

Roth: No, the riding helped it. No, I just had it and I couldn't move out of bed. We got as far as Lake Louise and there I was. So Bill said, "I think I'd better take you home." So there ended our honeymoon.

The Airplane Business: Amelia Earhart

Riess: He was very busy in those early days?

Roth: Very busy. He worked very, very hard.

Riess: Because the company was expanding.

Roth: Yes, and they wanted to go into the airplane business.

Riess: When did they start thinking about that?

Roth: Probably about the middle of the thirties, I guess. As a matter of fact, they owned two planes which they ran in the Islands for a short while, while they were trying to get the permit from Washington. But they were denied the permit because Washington felt that they would be the biggest in the shipping business, that they shouldn't be in the plane business.

As a matter of fact, my first trip up in the air was with Amelia Earhart, the first time. She came out here on her way when she made the trip to the South Pacific and they asked if she could spend the two nights with us because she did not want to go to a hotel.

Riess: Who asked?

Roth: Washington. I don't remember. So she spent two nights with us. The first night she gave a lecture at the Fairmont Hotel, I remember, and then Sunday she said, "Would you like to go up?" I had never been up. Bill had, but I hadn't. I was terrified, but I thought if I couldn't go up with Amelia Earhart, who was about to cross the Pacific, I would never go up! So I went up in her plane. They had taken all of the furniture out, it was stripped, and there was one little seat for me to sit on behind her, and we flew all over the city. I was so scared but, after all, I did have confidence in her.

I'll never forget Sunday night I said, "Is there anything special you would like for breakfast?" She said, "Yes, I would like buttermilk." Did you ever try to get buttermilk on Sunday night? Bill and I walked the length of Polk Street. We finally found buttermilk and brought it home to her.

She was so nice, and she was very attractive.

Riess: I'm certainly glad you went up! Did she have the plane down at San Francisco Airport or was it closer?

Roth: In those days it was a little nearer town, further up. It was at Tanforan. That was where they had the air field.

Riess: Did she seem kind of a strange lone soul?

Roth: Not to me. But not knowing whatever happened to her makes you wonder what did happen.

The Twins

Riess: When did you realize you were going to have twins?

Roth: I realized it one week before they were born, and there was no place in the house for the twins because I was going to put the baby in little Billy Roth's room who was then four years old, but you couldn't put twins in the boy's room. That was one too many for him.

So I called this friend of mine at eight in the morning (Alfred Swinerton) and I said, "Alfred, come right over as soon as you get out of bed!" So, of course, his wife said right away, "Telephone right back. Maybe the Roths have had a fight."

Alfred arrived and he said, "What is the matter?" I said, "You have one week to raise the roof so I can have another bedroom." And he did it in a week. We raised a part of the roof so we could have another bedroom! As a matter of fact, the twins didn't get home in a week, so it gave him a little more time.

Riess: Were they very tiny?

Roth: Yes, three and a half pounds and four and a half, and that's pretty small. There weren't incubaters, but I had to leave them at the hospital for a couple of weeks.

Riess: They are identical twins.

Roth: Identical; they were really hard to tell apart, really hard. We had blue on one and pink on the other.

Riess: I know that when Lurline was looking at a picture of herself and Berenice that she showed at the talk at Filoli, she had to think about it before she could remember.

Roth: Yes, it was hard to tell from the pictures, you could be confused. But when you saw them, one weighed more.

Riess: Were there any twins in your family background?

Roth: I believe my mother's mother's family. Her mother had twins and they had both died. So I didn't know anything about them.

Riess: The doctor hadn't heard two heartbeats?

Roth: No, he never told me. I don't think he ever did hear them. He only knew one week ahead, but don't forget, they came almost a month ahead.

Roth: But twins are the most wonderful thing because they are so interesting, especially identical twins. I think it's different with twins that are not identical.

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Roth: For instance, I never could discipline one without the other standing up for her sister. If one would lose a tooth, the other would lose a tooth. That always happened, even through an accident maybe--falling off something--then next week the other would lose a tooth. It's always gone that way. It's the bond they have together—not that they agree because both of my twins are not alike at all, not alike in disposition at all. But there is this bond that if anything comes up they're like one person.

Riess: Did they have a secret language?

Roth: I don't know.

Riess: Did they communicate in some ways that you could not understand?

Roth: No, I don't think so.

Riess: Did you keep them dressed as twins?

Roth: They dressed together I think until they were married. I had fun doing that and I think that they enjoyed it. They didn't have to, I didn't care. But I think they dressed together.

Riess: If they were identical I guess they wouldn't compete in the way that sisters ordinarily would.

Roth: They couldn't because Bren had the trouble with her eyes and I had to take her out of school and start her with Braille. It was difficult for her and she went back to school and took her examinations and graduated, but it was awfully hard because the doctor said she must not be in classrooms all day. She had to be out exercising; during that period of her life she must have fresh air exercise or the eyes would go back. They were borderline, you see. So she made it.

Woodside

"Why Worry"

Riess: When did you pick up with your family and move down to Woodside?

Roth: In 1937. Before Filoli we had "Why Worry" [in Woodside] which we loved. We went down every summer, not too much in the winter, but every summer. In those days, my husband was very busy and he really was not enthusiastic about going to Woodside, even in the summers I must say! But when we had Filoli he loved it then and didn't want to move back to town.

Riess: In Woodside did you have the amenities that he liked?

Roth: We belonged to the club and we had nice parties.

My mother lived with us when we went down and she died there.

Riess: What was "Why Worry" like? What was the style of life like there?

Roth: Oh, it was great.

Riess: What kind of a house was it?

Roth: An old-fashioned house, just a house and that was it. But it had a swimming pool and in those days in Woodside there were only two swimming pools--our swimming pool and the Jacklings pool. So it was always gay in the summer. The young people would either swim at the Jacklings or at our place. So there was always a crowd.

My mother bought the land, the house, and then we built new stables, because there weren't any there. The stables are still there, and I still use them.

Riess: It sounds like your mother had long since reconciled herself to being a horse woman, even though it was imposed on her by your father.

Roth: It was imposed on her but she knew it was in the family and [chuckles] she had to live with it.

Riess: She recognized it in you too.

Roth: If she was going to live with me, she had to live with the horses. Oh, she liked them, too, and Mother went to the horse shows with me.

Buying Filoli

Roth: Filoli was really an accident.* We found out about it one Sunday at luncheon. Someone said to my husband, "Why don't you buy Filoli? You have twin daughters making their debut this year and starting to go out."

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*includes material from Interview 4

Roth: Bill said, "Let's go look at it." I said, "Why? We are happy where we are. What do we have to move for?" Bill said, "Let's go." So we went and, well, anybody after looking at it couldn't [not] be charmed with it. But at that period the Burlingame Country Club was thinking of buying it for the Burlingame Club. Naturally we wouldn't interfere with that. It wouldn't be right to bid against your club and all your friends. But they didn't want it in the end. They thought it was too far out.

So we bought it, within a week. We owned it within a week, which was a pretty quick change from the old house I lived in in Woodside to Filoli! [laughter]

Riess: You really did have an immediate response.

Roth: Oh, you have to with Filoli because it is so beautiful. You can't help but be charmed with it--the garden, the view, the mountains, everything about it.

Riess: But the burden of running the home?

Roth: I never thought of that because, well, I just never thought about it.

Riess: What time of year was it when you first saw it?

Roth: It was in the fall, I think; summer, maybe, later summer I would think.

Riess: Was it all furnished?

Roth: Completely furnished, completely furnished, and according to the sale, I was to pick out anything I wanted in the house at the price that it was listed.

Riess: The banks had already--

Roth: They had had everything appraised. I was to take all of the time I wanted to do that and I did. Naturally, I couldn't afford some things--for instance, the tapestry for $75,000, I couldn't possibly afford it. So I had to mark off a great many things because the things were appraised at their real value and also I had nice things of my own.

At that period Lurline, my daughter, was sick and I had sent her down to Palm Springs to get over this sinus attack she had and I had to go down every weekend to see her. This one weekend, the second weekend we owned the place, the bank--Filoli was controlled by three banks--the bank asked if it would be all right if a few of their very close customers came and picked out some of the things I hadn't tagged yet. Well, I said "Yes," thinking it would be maybe four to six people who would come in. "Perfectly all right."

Roth: I came back from Palm Springs on a Monday morning and the whole courtyard was filled with cars! I saw my friends walking out with furniture. So I went to the telephone and I burst into tears and I said to Bill, "I won't live in Filoli." He said, "What has gone wrong?" I said, "Everybody in the country is in our house pulling out all our furniture." He said, "Stop that crying." "What will you do?" I said, "You better buy the whole thing." So then he bought everything--furniture and everything. Everybody was told to drop what they were taking out. So people got to the front door with a chair, but they didn't get it out the front door!

Riess: And did you buy the tapestries?

Roth: Everything, everything, and then we sold what we couldn't afford at a three day auction. We kept, of course, lots of the things we couldn't afford because with the auction we could do it. So in the end, I got all of the tapestries. But a great many of my friends still have some of the Filoli chairs!

They finally came in--and it was really funny--they finally came in from a phone call from the banks and said, "Everybody must not take another thing out of the house," and some people were right at the front door! [laughter] And they didn't get out.

Riess: What kinds of papers were there around on the history of the house?

Roth: Really nothing because the Bourn's daughter [Maud] passed away, so there was only Billy Vincent, the grandson, and his sister. She was married and lived in Europe. So I had really very little history.

Riess: Were there plans around?

Roth: Yes, there were plans of the house, tons of plans--tons of plans! The house was very well built. I had a plumber that always liked crawling between the floors all over the house fixing the plumbing.

It was a very well built house. The bricks were all made to order. They are a little different color from an ordinary bright red brick. They are a soft color, a lovely color. They were made to order. Mr. Bourn bought a lot of his stones from his sidewalk in town, in the city, down, and used them in the garden in many places.

He used to drive around the place in a rig. I often saw him when I lived in Woodside and we had permission to ride through the place. You would see Mr. Bourn in his rig being driven around the back roads. The back road of Filoli is the old Spanish road. It goes right through the place and it is beautiful--oh, maybe five miles. The ferns and the trees are really beautiful. He used to go driving.

Riess: That was also available for you to horseback ride?

Roth: Yes, in Woodside we were allowed, if we were a member of the Woodside riding club, to drive.

Riess: Did you maintain that as an open place?

Roth: Oh, yes, we always kept it open. It's open still. The city has permission, I believe, to go through, too.

So that's how we bought Filoli and we couldn't have been happier--thirty years there.

Riess: Did the Bourns have the same attachment to the furniture and furnishings that you feel?

Roth: Oh, I think Mrs. Bourn did. She was the most wonderful housekeeper. Every piece of furniture had the history in it.

I used to have the history of this piece right in here [cabinet next to Mrs. Roth's desk]. But it's so valuable now, I have it in the safe. But I could open this drawer and here it would tell all about this piece of furniture.

Riess: Was the furniture accumulated by her or was it handed down to her?

Roth: No, it was accumulated by her. But she hadn't lived in the house that long.

Riess: Was the house in any way a public place in the Bourn's time?

Roth: No, I would not say it was. Although Mrs. Bourn loved music, and Paderewski played there, and my piano that was on the stage she bought for him to play a concert at Filoli. She had teas with music. But they were both sick quite a bit during their life there, so I don't think they entertained too much.

III HORSES

[Interview 3: October 20, 1980]##

Roth: After my father's death, I started with a real show stable which is different from having one good horse, and went in the twenties to Kansas City to buy horses from Loulu Long Combs who was probably our greatest horsewoman in America. She lived at Lee Summit, Missouri, and her father was Eli Long who was from the great lumber company in Washington.

Riess: How did you decide to put all of your eggs into this basket?

Roth: Because in the first place she was a friend, and in the second place she had the best and was also an amateur.

I bought, at that time, a five-gaited horse, a three-gaited horse, a Standardbred road horse, a big Hackney horse, a Hackney pony, and a jumper--a complete stable. We hired the trainer and shipped directly to Portland where there was a horse show going on, and I won every championship there excepting with the jumper, and he knocked all the fences down and I left him there. So that was really my start.

Riess: You had a phenomenal eye for horses! Did you pick them yourself or did you have somebody with you?

Roth: No, I picked them. From then on I improved the stable because although it was a good stable that I had picked it wasn't really good enough to go to Madison Square or any of the eastern shows. So from then on I eliminated and kept improving and improving until in the middle of the twenties I really had quite a top stable. I was able to compete and I went to New York (Madison Square). They had a wonderful show in Boston at that time, Sewickley; and Devon, Pennsylvania. And Louisville, of course, for saddle horses is the top of all shows.

In '25 I bought my great horse, Chief of Longview.

Riess: Tell me about women as great horse breeders. Is there a longstanding tradition?

Roth: Oh, yes, there were so many women that were so good in the east in those days. After all, a ladies phaeton class is a woman's class, so a man couldn't be interested in that. Most of the men riding were professionals and all the amateurs rode, drove, in the Hackneys especially because all of these classes are really classes that amateurs could do just as well as a professional.

Riess: When you went to purchase that first stable of horses did you have a trainer with you to advise you?

Roth: I didn't have a trainer then. I got the stable and then got the trainers and from then on had trainers all through my life, different ones, as they lasted. I had the greatest trainer in the world in Lon Hayden who rode the Chief of Longview. He was a lot of trouble because he had a drinking problem.

Riess: That often is associated with stables.

Roth: [laughs] It goes with it! It's par for the course! But he was the greatest--I think most anyone would say--he was the greatest five-gaited rider there was. He rode the Chief; he and the Chief were together. I remember once I lost the wheel off my rig way at the other end of the ring and Lon was down by the gate and he just said, "Whoa," and the horse stopped, and I'm driving him! That's how they were together.

He [the Chief] was known as "The Great Parader." When I took him to the Boston show, so many people came to see him that they took the door right off the front of his stall and [we] just put a rope across. He was a stallion, which rarely could do a thing like that.

Riess: He had that good nature.

Roth: Good nature and <u>loved</u> the crowd. He was a ham actor really and he just loved a crowd!

Riess: When did you start showing him?

Roth: I started showing him in '25. I guess he was a three-year old maybe when I bought him. He showed until I thought that he had showed enough as a gaited horse, then we showed him in fine harness. And in fine harness I drove him and I was never defeated, never defeated with him and he wasn't easy to drive.

Now, this [looking at book] is typical fine harness because a fine harness always is a horse that looks beautiful driving.

Riess: And holds itself in a very proud way.

Roth: And that was born with him, so I didn't have to do anything about it. He had that kind of a face.

He was in the fire at Oakland. The horse show was going on there in the big auditorium, but the stalls were outside, wooden stalls. About four hundred horses were burned. I lost three in my stable. The fire started behind the Chief of Longview's stall, but they got him out right away, and they say he was parading around like he thought the fire was in his honor!

The Los Angeles Herald, the girl down there wrote quite an article on the Chief of Longview in the fire. It was called "The Great Parader in the Oakland Fire." So that was published in all the papers because horses in a fire run back to the fire. Instead of running backward, they held him and he was just parading around.

We got all our horses out but three and unfortunately one of my best pairs was burned and it split up my pair. One I had just bought the night before--just had delivered the check the night before! He was dead the next day.

Then after the Chief I had Sweetheart on Parade who was my grey mare. I mention these two because of all the horses I have had, they are really both famous. Everybody knows Sweetheart on Parade and Chief of Longview. If they know horses, they have heard of them.

Riess: Chief of Longview comes from Harrison Chief I have read.

Roth: Yes, Independence Chief and Harrison Chief. He was very well bred, but Loulu had not used the stallion that he was by for her good mares, she was using another stallion. Then suddenly she changed and bred this mare to Independence Chief.

Riess: You got the Chief of Longview from Loulu?

Roth: Yes, later, and the trainer, who was one of her trainers--she had three--didn't want to come to California, but he finally came and he stayed with me until he died. That was Lon Hayden.

Riess: Loulu let you know she had this choice horse?

Roth: Yes, Mother and I looked at him six months before we bought him. My mother bought him.

As a matter of fact, my husband was very upset that my mother bought this horse because she paid $25,000, which was in the newspapers, and unfortunately, during that time there was a strike on the docks and Bill felt very uncomfortable walking down on the pier, knowing that all those men had read in the paper that his wife had a $25,000 horse. It was embarrassing for him.

Roth: But I didn't buy the horse; my mother bought the horse. I mean she gave it to me which explained it, but it was a little bit touchy at the time.

Riess: In that first two-year period, how much of a horse's learning goes on? Is it fully gaited?

Roth: They are really started. He was really famous because he won the aged championship when he was only three years old. As a rule, you show two-year-olds and three-year-olds in their own classes but not against a four-year-old or a five-year-old. He won what they call a championship as a three-year-old which was something that I don't think has ever happened since either. Then he won the state championship at Louisville twice, the stallion championship three times, and Sweetheart won it also.

She was as great as he was. She followed him. I really retired him a little early because she was right there ready to go. Now, she was from Tennessee and very beautiful.

Riess: What was the stable that you bought her from?

Roth: I bought her from Bill Shropshire. She was half Standardbred.

Riess: When you show horses, it's not the breeding, it's the gait?

Roth: As a rule, the breeding comes to the front. I mean a horse that will have a really outstanding trot generally is by a stallion that has a good trot. You don't want to breed to a stallion that only goes in front and doesn't go off his hocks.

Riess: So it isn't just learning.

Roth: It isn't just learning. Breeding has a lot to do with it. I've been on the American Saddle Registry board for years.

Riess: Once you developed your own stable down at Why Worry, you were then a breeder?

Roth: Yes, then I started having various stallions, or mares with no stallion. But I always had brood mares. I have now a stallion in Kentucky and probably eight top brood mares. So I hope to get top colts. This was my first year and they were all good this year. So I am very happy.

Riess: When can you tell that you have top colts?

Roth: Oh, you can tell when the colt's born sometimes, by what they can do when they are a baby. One of the best I ever had I could tell--I bought her when she was twelve days old.

Riess: What can she do other than frisk around in the meadow?

Roth: She can trot.

Riess: I thought that was a learned gait.

Roth: It's not a learned gait. You can teach them a lot of things, but you can't teach them to trot properly. For a saddle horse, their natural gait should be trotting. For a Thoroughbred, galloping would be their gait; it wouldn't be trotting.

Sometimes they're good when they're five days old, then something happens and they don't turn out, but this is luck.

Riess: Then the time spent with the mare, is that an important learning time for the colt?

Roth: I don't think so, no. It's growing time, that's all. I think the mother has a great deal to do with it, the breeding on the mother's side. I'm very careful with my mares. They are all well bred from stallions with a predigree that I know is good. Then they should be good looking in conformation.

Riess: Did you use Sweetheart or Chief of Longview for breeding?

Roth: Yes, Sweetheart had two colts and one was quite good and the other was mediocre. The Chief I bred. I won a couple of futurities in Kentucky with his colts; very nice colts he had. But I only bred him a short time, maybe a couple of years. So he didn't have too many and he didn't have the opportunity with too many good mares because he was East then.

Riess: Most of the action is still in the East?

Roth: Oh, yes, in the East because Kentucky is the big show. Madison Square is really for hunters. It used to be different, but now it's mostly hunters and the foreign teams.

Riess: Then the horse country of Virginia, that area?

Roth: That's the hunters, and they have gaited horses there because Devon [is there]. Then in the East there are a great many Hackneys because all of those eastern families have been driving for years and have stables. Loulu Combs was the greatest.

Riess: She came from the West originally?

Roth: Yes, from Washington, from Longview, which had the biggest lumber [company]. Her father never took a drink, Loulu never took a drink, wouldn't show horses. . .

Riess: Why do you mention that right away?

Roth: [laughs] Well, I mention it because she was different from anyone else. They never showed horses on Sunday.

Riess: Do you think that when the drinking and the horses get mixed, that horses sometimes get mistreated?

Roth: No, they don't get mistreated because most people who love horses don't mistreat them.

Riess: I wonder why the drinking is so prevalent.

Roth: Oh, because they just all get together and "Let's have a drink" and everybody does. They stay up late at night having fun.

Riess: Maybe if you've got a lot of Irish horse trainers--and probably a lot of them are.

Roth: Sure, why certainly; Irish and Scots. I had, oh, probably four trainers with my Hackneys that were all English.

I never had any trouble excepting with Lon Hayden. He was the only one and he really became very bad. But he was older then and probably his time was over. Anyway, he finally hung himself because I wouldn't take him back after firing him. He came and asked if I'd take him back. I said, "Lon, I can't. My husband won't allow me to." Bill said I just couldn't have a man around the stable the way he was acting.

Riess: How many men did you have working in the stable?

Roth: By then I had a number. In those days you could get people. Now you can't get anyone. I have most all Mexicans now, excepting my trainer.

Riess: They have a good feeling for horses, don't they?

Roth: Yes, and also for the bottle. We get them out of jail! [laughs]

Riess: That combination does sound like you could have fires fairly easily.

Roth: It does, but we don't have any fires near us because I have a night watchman. Ever since that fire [Oakland] I have always had a night watchman. As a matter of fact, I had a night watchman that night. That's why my horses got out. I had about fifteen horses there and only lost three and most people lost most of their horses--four hundred were burned. I always had a boy sleeping in the stable, and a watchman. It's dangerous. They are wooden stalls and they are not supposed to smoke but they do, so it's really dangerous.

Roth: Tomorrow [October 21, 1980] the horses go to the show. Tomorrow we move them up to the Cow Palace. It's a small group now from what I used to have.

Riess: What will you have there? [Grand National Horse Show, Cow Palace, 1980]

Roth: At the Cow Palace I will have a road horse, a three-gaited horse that we raised, and two Hackney ponies. That will be four.

Riess: Will you have some member of the family showing them?

Roth: Mrs. Martin is showing the pony in the ladies amateur class. I have a rider for the three-gaited horse and my trainer [Stan Morrison] drives the ponies.

The children rode and they had three and five-gaited horses. I don't think they ever rode at Madison Square but they did at Devon which is a very big summer show in Philadelphia; a tremendous show.

Riess: Who did they learn to ride from out here?

Roth: Different trainers that I had.

Riess: There weren't riding schools?

Roth: Not in those days. Now there are. Now there is a lot of competition. Of course, it's the amateurs that keep the stables up.

Riess: In the East you are really <u>taught</u> to ride.

Roth: In the East so many people buy one very good horse for their daughter. They don't have a stable of horses; they have one very good horse.

Riess: Which is then stabled somewhere in the vicinity?

Roth: With some trainer. But that's what keeps it going, that's what keeps the shows going.

They have these new cameras now, movies that you can take. I have a very beautiful thing [videotape] of my pony taken in the ring. I will probably have the man here do some, too, the movie man, if I can get someone to do it. So you can run those tapes and see where your mistakes are.

Riess: Also where your riders' mistakes are.

Roth: Yes, and he can see where his mistakes are. Those are all new things.

Sweetheart on Parade

Mrs. William P. Roth, General Mark W. Clark, and American Red Cross President Basil O'Connor, San Francisco, June 23, 1948

Chief of Longview

Photo from recent sketch by Lloyd Sexton

MRS. WILLIAM P. ROTH

Riess: Who taught you to ride?

Roth: Oh, I never was taught. I never had a lesson.

Riess: But it was the first trainer that you had?

Roth: I didn't even have a trainer. I just had a horse. You just get on the horse and ride. That's nothing.

Riess: I thought there was skill in riding.

Roth: There is, but it has to be your hands; the skill is in your hands, not your body, because anybody can ride. But the skill in riding is in your hands.

Riess: There is a lot of nerve involved, don't you think?

Roth: Oh, yes, there is. I used to be terrified when I'd go in the ring with the Chief of Longview for fear I'd be beaten, because I never wanted to be beaten. But he made his own show and I didn't have to do a thing. He just made it himself. Sometimes I couldn't possibly hold him, but I always knew if I said, "Whoa," he'd stop for me. So I just didn't worry.

I was asked to make his [Chief of Longview] final show at Louisville. The governor was there that night and I planned it so carefully. I was going twice around the ring one way and twice the other and then make an outstanding exit, and let him go real fast. Well, the two times each way worked perfectly but at my exit, he got a little too excited and I could never have pulled him in. And I thought at that time, right in front of the governor, I probably would be thrown right out of the ring. [laughter] But I got to the end of the ring and Lon said, "Whoa," and he stopped.

Riess: So it was an outstanding, thundering exit.

Roth: It was a thundering exit! Not on purpose though, not on purpose.

Riess: Would that all be reported in the papers?

Roth: Oh, yes.

Riess: Then Bill would read about his wife?

Roth: Oh, no, no, he was over that as soon as the strike was over. Oh, no, he loved the Chief of Longview.

Riess: Did he come to the shows?

Roth: Yes, only when I rode or drove.

Riess: When I was saying "nerve" I guess I was thinking more of jumpers and a certain kind of risk that is involved there.

Roth: Yes, that's different. I never jumped at all.

Riess: Did your daughters?

Roth: Lurline did. Yes, she broke her back jumping. She fell off and broke her back. Both the twins rode, but then since they married, Lurline is the only one because they have their ranch in Woodside. So she rides a lot.

The granddaughters--Lolly Menzies rode hunters and was very good until she started having the children. Once you have children you can't ride. You can't do both things, it's impossible. So she gave up her horses, but she had won many ribbons for a very good hunter class. One of the Roths rode--Jessica rode. Then Brennie is my granddaughter that drives.

Riess: In my foray into horse lore and so on, I came across the term "rack," for one of the gaits. What is that?

Roth: It's a gait that is taught the horse. They're not born with it, it's taught. It's the fifth gait.

Riess: Can you recognize the horse that will have the capacity to do that?

Roth: If it's difficult for the horse, the horse isn't going to do it and he isn't a five-gaited horse. It takes more out of a horse, I guess, then a plain trot because there is a great deal of action.

Riess: "Rack, also called single foot--" [looking at book]

Roth: Single foot is an old expression they used to use for the rack. Single foot and rack are the same. Rack is correct.

There also is the slow gait. The slow gait is the rack, only slow, and your horse is really up on the bit and going slow and very smart looking. Then when they say "rack" you go right from that slow gait into a rack and then they must go fast, and if they can't go fast they can't win.

Riess: Is it easier for them to do it fast?

Roth: No, because the problem is they're apt to break, because they get going very fast, and they're apt to break, and one break and everybody goes "ah!" and the horse is tied down [laughter]. Then there is the trot, which is the third gait, the walk which is the fourth, and the canter, which is the fifth.

Riess: Does the rack require a lot of control from the rider?

Roth: You sit to the saddle, but you change your holding of the bit because on a trot you may have the horse on the bit, but in a rack the horse must be free.

Riess: So once the horse goes into the rack--

Roth: They go from the curb to the snaffle. They use the snaffle on the trot and then on the rack you use the curb. There is a curb bit so you have to change your hands.

Riess: Riding is full of precision and correctness.

Roth: It is.

Riess: So that there is both some instinct involved but a lot of following a certain rule.

Roth: Some people could just never learn how to ride properly. They would be too stiff, or have no hands, and if you have no hands, that's the really important thing.

Riess: Can the hands be seen early in the rider?

Roth: Oh, yes, you surely can see, if they get on a horse and start grabbing the bit. Now, Lon Hayden rode a horse very heavily-bitted, with a very sharp curb. I remember the many arguments we used to have with a very, very prominent judge. He was a university man and he always said to Lon, "You shouldn't ride that way." But Lon rode that way, but he never took hold of the horse's mouth. His hands were so light that he never had to touch it.

Riess: I read of American Saddlebred horses that they were highly trained, fabulously expensive, "the peacocks of the show ring."

Roth: Yes, that's right. Now, you can pay $100,000 for a saddle horse. That's what these people pay for their children's horses.

Riess: They have a long life, don't they?

Roth: Depending on when you get them. I don't think they go that long. The horse does, if it's properly taken care of, but some people show too often. I never showed more than six shows a year.

Riess: Then inbetween there is a period when the horse isn't training at all?

Roth: We'd sometimes turn them out for a couple of months really to run out and rest.

Riess: It takes it out of the horse, the tension and--

Roth: Yes, it does, because it's like the person riding or driving, you're keyed up and the horse is keyed up.

Riess: Can that be looked for in breeding, that ability to tolerate tension?

Roth: Yes, you don't want to breed to a horse that hasn't a lot of heart. I know some very good stallions in Kentucky that have some winning colts, but the colts haven't enough heart. That means that they win when they're small or maybe two-year olds. But then when they get into the age group where they really have to put on a long show, they haven't the heart. So there is a lot in breeding. It may be because [laughs] I've been on the board [American Saddlebred Horse Association] so long that I'm strong on breeding, but I always have been.

Riess: What are you able to accomplish as a board member of these various groups?

Roth: Well, we tend to all of the registering of everything that is registered.

Riess: Give me an example of the sort of questions you deal with.

Roth: A question right now is publicity for the Saddlebred, because the Quarter horses have come along and spent a fortune. They've spend a fortune and they're going very strong. They have these big shows which are the highest money given in any division. They're ahead of the Thoroughbreds in the prize money. So the saddle horse people-- if you go to a horse show and you win fifty dollars for first prize it doesn't help with the expenses of the stable much. It doesn't even pay for the hay for the day.

Riess: But you say that people are still buying these $100,000 horses?

Roth: Yes, they are, but one horse. They advertise everybody can ride a Quarter horse. Well, everybody could ride a saddle horse just the same. But, they put it over and everybody <u>does</u> ride a Quarter horse.

Riess: Where is most of the Quarter horse breeding taking place?

Roth: California and Texas.

Riess: So it is really quite a different influence in the horse world.

Roth: It's amazing the people that have the Quarter horses. I mean $200,000 for a Quarter horse to show!

Riess: So you would worry then that the American Saddlebred horses would just be phased out?

Roth: They won't be phased out, but it's [a struggle] trying to keep them up.

##

Riess: It's fun to dip into a book. I can tell you what I've read [about American show horses] and you can tell me that it's perfect nonsense! I've read that what you look for in the Quarter horse is unusually deep and intelligent eyes. I wondered if that in fact is true, that they have deeper eyes and that the deep eyes indicate intelligence?

Roth: [laughs] Definitely not! That's the build-up. You want a good eye in any horse and I think the worst thing is a small eye or a white eye.

Riess: Large dilated nostrils are desirable--is that because in fact they can breathe more that way?

Roth: No, that is not true. If they are large and dilated I would think that they're tired and haven't enough breath or they've had some dope--which they could have.

Riess: Is that just a recent problem?

Roth: No, it's been going on for years but I think now we're terribly aware. They're fined and they test the horses.

Riess: Have you ever been in situations where it has been discovered?

Roth: Oh, ours are tested every time they win. Our Hackney pony, the poor woman sits there in the stall with a bucket all night long because he won't urinate and she's got to sit there until he does! (She is a state inspector.) He's a horrible pony because some of them do it right away, but he just will wait and wait and it's three in the morning sometimes before she gets to go home! [laughter]

The American Horse Show Association tests all over the country. California is the only state that does their own testing and they're not as good really as they should be. They should be better.

Riess: Do you mean they miss?

Roth: They miss a lot.

Riess: Are there stories of bribery and scandal at that level?

Roth: No, if you are caught it goes to the Horse Show Association Committee. It first is gone over by your state committee. (I'm on that committee.) Then we recommend whether it should be a long time that they should not be allowed to show or whether it was something that wasn't really their fault.

Riess: It could be administered by the trainer and not known by the owner.

Roth: Yes, but we [the owners] are responsible. But there are some ways you might not be responsible and that's why it goes through two committees. Then they are allowed to come, both the owner and the trainer, and explain why it happened. And it shouldn't happen because it shouldn't be, you should not dope the horses.

Of course, the Tennessee walking horse people did it so much because their horses suffered so that it gets rid of the pain that people don't see.

Riess: So it was a humanitarian--

Roth: The Tennessee walking horses--it's not humanitarian when a horse can't stand on his feet because they hurt him so badly. There is nothing humane about that. What they do to the horses-- If you've ever seen a Tennessee walking horse! We didn't even allow them at the Cow Palace for three years because one year it was so terrible, blood just running out of those poor horses' feet. They have to take whips to get them out of the stalls because the poor horses couldn't walk they were so sore.

The Tennessee walking people themselves have tried to stop it and they are stopping it and I think we have the horses again here. I'm not sure. But they are better now and they are inspected before they come in the ring.

Riess: I should think any real horse lover would be outraged.

Roth: But you would be surprised, you'd be surprised. I sat at the club in Louisville this last year and I heard a woman say, "Oh, I love the Tennessee walking horses. They are so exciting." But she probably doesn't realize, she's never seen those feet. The feet are this long. [gestures] How would you like to have your foot cut off? I don't know. We couldn't deform our feet like they do with those poor horses. And they put the salve in that burns. Oh, it's dreadful, dreadful.

Riess: What are the ways in which they are trying to reform it?

Roth: They are stopping now. That wasn't the original reason for stopping the dope, but they don't have dope in racing so it's the same idea. The medicine they would give a horse would make it last longer in the five-gaited class; with a little bit of dope maybe it would be more brilliant.

Riess: But when the dope is used for racing the effect is that the horse isn't fully aware and then stumbles.

Roth: It's not allowed in racing. Where it is very dangerous is [in] children's classes with hunters because a hunter can be sold to a child and the hunter be given a little something and it's quiet. But then sometimes something goes wrong and the child can be badly hurt and also the hunter can be lamed. Then suddenly it [could] wear off and the hunter falls with the child. It's really the hunters that are very hard against it, especially in the East.

Riess: Hunters and jumpers are the same thing?

Roth: Hunters and jumpers are not the same thing, no. It is the same kind of a horse, the same breed, but not the same thing because a hunter has to have conformation and a jumper can be not a Thoroughbred. He can be Hackney, and they often are, or a Standardbred or an Arabian. He can be anything. But a hunter must be a registered Thoroughbred.

Riess: "Quarter horses are the best natured breed and the only in which stallions are commonly ridden and shown by women and children."

Roth: I would say that's not true.

Riess: But you had an extraordinary experience with the Chief. You were saying that stallions generally—

Roth: Well, I think it's a horse show rule, or used to be, that women weren't supposed to show stallions. But I did and I really don't know if it's a rule now. I don't think so. No, I don't think that's true at all, but that is their publicity and it's sold lots of [horses].

Riess: Did your neighbors in Woodside when you lived at Why Worry have stables?

Roth: The Folgers did. The Folgers had nice horses. Yes, they had horses and a beautiful stable. The Jacklings were there and the Herbert Moffitts and the Harrisses. The Schillings were there too. They were all early Californians.

Riess: Were any of them showing?

Roth: No. I think I was the only one showing or maybe there were others. I've forgotten. It was lovely and people rode a lot over the weekends on the trails. There were some wonderful riding trails. The Woodside Trail Club is still in existence. They had good trails with gates with which you could go through different private properties. As I said, I used to ride from there over through the back roads through Filoli, which was wonderful riding.

Most of the people down there were interested in horses, and they rode a lot. On the Fourth of July we used to hitch up our coach and go with our coach down to Menlo Park with the hornblower and everything

Roth: in uniform, all properly done. It was a lot of fun. We'd go down there just for the races. They always had races on the fourth at the Circus Club.

Riess: Does that term "circus" just mean round?

Roth: The reason it was called the Circus Club was because it started as a club where the children came and rode, little children, I mean the five and six-year olds. Mr. Walter, who started the group, used to stand with a big whip like [in] the circus! The kids would go around the ring and my children rode there. From that it went into a country club. I worked on the Circus Club and the country club finally took it over with the understanding one day a year the whole club should be ours for a benefit for the Stanford Hospital for Children and the convalescent home, and that still goes on.

Riess: So as far as clubs go, that's quite different then from the Woodside Trail Club.

Roth: Oh, yes, the Woodside Trail Club is just memberships. You pay so much and a little bit of money keeps up the trails and the gates and you become members to ride on the trails and have a key to open the gates. That's still in existence.

Riess: Horses--

Roth: I could go on for hours on the horses! [laughter] I did go from saddle horses to Hackneys more because in the first place, I don't ride, myself, anymore. I could drive the Hackneys, but I think that for riding young people look nicer, and as you get older then that's time to get off the horse in the show ring. Then I went over to driving the Hackneys. Now, you see, I am almost completely Hackneys. I have just one saddle horse that I'm showing here which is the first time I have showed a saddle horse for quite a while.

Riess: Are you very enthusiastic about this one?

Roth: Yes, I am. There is one class that I still keep for saddle horses which is fine harness. That's why I raise all of these colts, to try and get a champion fine harness horse. But they don't always turn out. This one I'm showing [that] I showed this year is fine harness. But I don't think he is good enough to go on another year as fine harness, so now he's saddle. And I happen to have a rider, which is lucky.

Riess: What is the name of this horse?

Roth: Mountain Storm.

Riess: What goes into the naming?

Roth: A lot of thought--and mostly lipstick! [laughs] I find that lipstick ads are the best to find names. They always have a little pep to them, so I look through all the magazines and find all the lipsticks that are advertised and then try to think a name out.

Now with the Quarterbreds, they are so strong on their certain stallion breeds, like Dakbar, you've got to get Dakbar in the name somehow. I don't bother with the saddle. But if the judge looks down and sees something with Dakbar in it, it looks good, because that's top breeding and they're very strong on their breeding now, which is good because they were lax for awhile so I think now it's good they're strong.

Riess: Do you think that the name of the rider has the same influence on the judges?

Roth: Yes, I think it has a great deal of influence.

Riess: Would you think that that's a mistake?

Roth: No, it's not a mistake. I think a rider that is a top rider, the judge may look at him more or he may look at him less because he'll figure, well, he can canter his horse easy because he is a good rider. It works both ways. But with the Quarter horses, there is no doubt that the top riders gets a little bit of recognition.

Riess: Is there importance in what order the horses come into the ring, and how is that determined?

Roth: They all come in together excepting Quarter horses, [who] work individually. With Quarter horses there might be a difference because it's working with cattle. You change your cattle every say ten horses, so the cattle at about the eighth horse that's working sometimes get a little smart.

Riess: The other thing is they might begin to feel a little defeated.

Roth: Or a little tired running around the ring. But that's all in the draw.

Personally, I always like to be first in the ring if I have a good horse because if you come in first you know the judge is going to look at you because he always looks at the first horse that comes in. Then they all come in and get all mixed up. But if you come in first and can make a good show, it's a good place to be. So I used to always scramble up and try to be first in the ring. Everybody is working their horse outside and it's a question of if you're right near the gate when they open it. You can't stand near the gate because you wouldn't be "standing" a horse, you'd be moving your horse. So I think first in is an advantage, though I don't know that it's that much of an advantage, but you are seen anyway; you are seen.

Riess: I understand that you had a good deal of style when you were riding and were known for hats and certain getups.

Roth: Oh, nowadays they have these tailors who make them the same as they have for hunting and shooting and you just have to buy whatever the style is. Sometimes it's a long coat--I've had long coats and I've had short coats. I think the style is a long coat now. Sometimes they're tight around the hips and sometimes they have little pleats. About every three years they change it so the tailors can make new suits! The same way with the field trial suits. When I was doing field trials sometimes the pants were terribly tight and the coat was loose or vice versa.

Riess: [laughs] That might eliminate certain people!

Roth: Yes, sure. It certainly made it hard for some of us to climb a fence once in awhile! [laughter]

Riess: Who sets the style?

Roth: The tailors. I remember when Mrs. Tobin and I went--where did we go? St. Louis--and the tailor was there. I said, "You better come and watch us go through the fence and then take my pants and get them fixed for the next time you see me!" Which he did. Oh, they were so tight I couldn't make it. So I think suits are the same for all those things.

Riess: Are you riding at all now?

Roth: I haven't ridden for about ten years. I would have liked to have ridden Longview, but it was a question of help really, For me, I like a horse ready to go. I didn't have enough time to work a horse and keep it ready to go and that kind of service just got a little hard to get.

Riess: You've said that that kind of help is hard to get. It reminds me of what one might say about good gardeners these days.

Roth: It's the same idea; it's the same way with our help in the stables. Also, they make more in a race track. If the horse wins, they get a part of the purse, and if you have a show stable you are paying a big salary for your man and yet you're winning nothing so you can't give them part of the purse because there isn't enough to give. In the Hackney classes the prizes are absolutely nothing.

Riess: The Grand National, is that a prestigious show?

Roth: It's very good, but it's not as good as Kansas City or Louisville, or Houston. And it's stock and cattle too, sheep and cattle. Santa Barbara is, I think, the best California show. This show, a lot of the show people don't like it because they have so many kinds of horses. They have the rodeo there. It's very western. Everybody wears cowboy hats and big cowboy getup. My son-in-law wears his cowboy hat when he goes.

They keep it up nicely, but for my department of show horses it isn't the biggest show.

Riess: And what became of Loulu Combs, and her stable?

Roth: Loulu, she died. A wonderful person. She used to call me once a month when she got older. She could certainly drive a horse.

Riess: Who were the other great women that you think of?

Roth: Mrs. Cox, Jessie Cox.

Riess: Where was she?

Roth: She came from Boston. She is connected with the Wall Street Journal. As a matter of fact, the Cox family are the largest stockholders, I think. She is one of my dear friends. She is younger than I am. I've bought horses from her. One of my best harness horses came from her and I think she is the only woman judge that's ever judged a Hackney show in England.

Riess: That's a very high honor. You've judged, I take it.

Roth: I've judged. I have a judge's card, but I let it go. I don't see well enough. You really have to see.

Then there was a Mrs. Moore who showed in the East who was wonderful at riding. Mrs. Van Sindren. They were from the East. Mrs. McCall, her son is president of one of the banks here. She was a beautiful driver. Wonderful horses. Hackneys.

Oh, there were many, but it's an entirely new group now. My friends have all gone. Take Jessie Cox, she doesn't ride or drive now. It's all a new group and I find that mostly this younger group has maybe one or two horses but they don't have the big stables like we used to have. People now just can't keep up big stables. They can't afford it.

Riess: What do you have at Why Worry?

Roth: I have a little group, a half-filled stable. I have a road horse, too, a Standardbred.

Roth: I have driven a road horse in the ring, but unfortunately, the last time I did it, there was a terrible accident and my husband was there. So then he forbid me to do it. The horse ran away and a horse trotting very fast that runs away--the girl that was driving her was one of our best drivers, Jean Scott--the horse jumped in a box and hurt somebody in the box and ran into two other rings. I got into the middle of the ring because my stable people always watch me very closely, so they jumped the fence and got me right away. I got in the middle of the ring myself, but they helped me stand there while this other horse was running all about. Unfortunately, my husband was there and his sister was there and she said to Bill, "Is this what your wife does when she goes to horse shows?" And that finished that!

Riess: When was that?

Roth: That was in Los Angeles, years ago. So I didn't get a chance. But now the women are going in that class again.

Riess: Is there any threat to the future of the Standardbreds?

Roth: Oh, no, this is a very popular class, the road class, very popular and the audience likes it, and why not? They trot so fast, they sometimes fall out of the rigs, and so there is always some excitement. It is a popular children's class and they do it with Hackney ponies. In Louisville I think there were twenty ponies going as fast as they could around the ring. I don't know why they all didn't fall out.

Riess: You are practically sitting on the horse's tail.

Roth: That's it, two wheels, a jockey cart.

I read the other day that the reason the pacers are so popular is because they can put the hobbles on them and go into the race and then the hobbles keep the horses from breaking, whereas if they're trotting and they get going too fast, they break and of course when a horse breaks he loses distance.

Riess: It's so odd-looking, like a marionette.

Roth: Yes, it keeps them going this way, both feet on one side at the same time. But if a saddle horse does that, they get the gate. The judge wouldn't even look at them.

Riess: Right. [quoting] "The Standardbred horse's gaits are too extended and uncomfortable for general pleasure use."

Roth: A Standardbred horse is a little more uncomfortable to ride and I'll tell you why. What makes your trot comfortable is your hock action, in other words, if you are properly balanced behind. But the horse that just goes high in front leaves you behind, and you haven't as good a trot. You look for the horse that just doesn't go in front, but the horse that goes front and back.

123 Bella Vista Drive
Hillsborough, California
94010

November 15, 1982

Dear Mrs. Reiss:

I let Mr. Herman Phleger read the original book you gave me and he thought it was extremely well done, but thought I had left out a very important thing. This was a case that he was my attorney for and involved taxes on my horses at Why Worry Farm.

Herm thought when he took me to court that I would lose the case, but he gave me the credit of winning it. He thought this was quite an accomplishment so he had all of it copied for me.

I am enclosing the copies for the book and if you want they can be put in loose, I leave it to your judgment.

Sincerely yours,

Lucline Roth

Mrs. William P. Roth

ted that the March 1, 1913, fair market value of petitioner's lots was from 40 to 60 cents per square foot.

The evidence of these witnesses was uncontradicted, and was not weakened upon cross-examination. We may not disregard it and resort to some theory or formula suggested by the respondent. As was said by the court in Fairmount Cemetery Ass'n. v. Commr., 79 F. (2d) 165; 1936 C.C.H. Vol. 3 A 9482—

We think the Board attached too great importance to the presumption in favor of the Commissioner's finding. That presumption is the sheet anchor of the Government in all doubtful cases, and the courts, including this court, have indulged it to the limit, but it must yield to uncontradicted evidence, and here there is such evidence. For here there is not only evidence of witnesses contradictory of the Commissioner's valuation, but more persuasive still—definite facts which show unmistakably that the Commissioner's figure on the unimproved land was mere guesswork.

Property such as is involved here should be valued with respect for the purpose for which it is intended and the improvements, facilities and its accessibility should all be considered. Prices that it might bring as a whole under foreclosure, or for farming, or building purposes are not convincing. We find that the fair market value of petitioner's lots as of March 1, 1913, was 32.68 cents per square foot, which was the figure which petitioner used in making out its income tax return for the year 1931.

It should be pointed out that in arriving at this figure we confine ourselves to a finding of the March 1, 1913, value per square foot of petitioner's land used for cemetery [illegible]. Respondent's counsel in his able brief seems to be of the mind that we should find the value per square foot of the entire 180 acres and that it would follow that this would be the per square foot value of the cemetery lots. But we do not look at it in this way. Many square feet of the land were used for roadways and walks in the cemeteries and for landscaping purposes and for greenhouses and other improvements. These improvements were the things that added to the value of the cemetery lots and as we view it, it is not our task to value the whole tract of 180 acres and then divide this value thus found by the number of square feet in the whole tract and thus arrive at the value per square foot of all the land included in the bounds of the cemetery. Our task is to arrive at the March 1, 1913, value per square foot of the cemetery lots and the value which we have reached, we think we must find from the testimony.

It is true that we do not have to accept blindly the testimony of expert witnesses as to value and we have not done so in this proceeding. Some of the witnesses testified to a far higher value than we have found. We have based our findings upon the testimony of witnesses who were thoroughly familiar with the cemetery lots on March 1, 1913, and prior thereto. We think this evidence is sufficient to overcome the prima facie correctness of respondent's determination stated in his deficiency notice and justifies the valuation which we have reached. In reaching a March 1, 1913, value we do not feel at liberty to apply certain discount figures along the lines which respondent argues in his brief. We have no testimony upon which to base any arbitrary discount. In fact our finding as to March 1, 1913, value takes into consideration all factors which were present on that date as shown by the testimony of witnesses. Further than that, we do not think we have any authority to go.

The Board and the Courts have held in a number of cases that where lots in a cemetery are sold under an agreement with the purchasers that a portion of the consideration shall be set aside in a separate fund to be used exclusively for maintenance purposes, and it is actually set aside in a separate fund and used for the purposes intended only, that the amounts so set aside are not taxable income to the cemetery company. Woodlawn Cemetery Association, 28 B.T.A. at page 885; Cedar Park Cemetery Ass'n. v. Commr., 67 F. (2d) 699, 13 A.F.T.R. 386; Portland Cremation Ass'n. v. Commr., 31 F. (2d) 843, 7 A.F.T.R. 8621; Evergreen Cemetery Ass'n., 21 B.T.A. 1194.

In the instant case the clause quoted from the deeds, the by-law of the petitioner, and petitioner's actions in creating and maintaining the separate maintenance fund are sufficient to create a trust, and the amounts collected by petitioner and paid into said fund during the taxable year are not taxable to it as income.

Decision will be entered under Rule 50.
Entered: Jan. 29, 1936.

[¶36,039].—WILLIAM C. RICE AND WIFE (TIRZAH M. RICE), Docket No. 48070.
H. V. Blaxter, Esq., for the petitioners.
James R. Johnston, Esq., for the respondent.

MEMORANDUM OPINION

STERNHAGEN: The Commissioner determined a deficiency of $1,088.55 in the income tax for 1926 of the petitioners, who filed a joint return. The proceeding was submitted with that of Docket No. 48071, Dennis A. Harris et al., Executors John P. Harris, upon the same stipulation of facts. It presents the same issues, namely, whether the transactions in which the shareholders of the Davis Company disposed of their shares to the Stanley Company constituted a statutory reorganization, and whether there was an exchange by each shareholder of his Davis shares for Stanley shares and a contemporaneous sale by him of half his Stanley shares for cash, as the petitioners contend, or a disposition by the Davis Company shareholders of their Davis shares in direct consideration of Stanley shares and cash, as the respondent contends.

In the Memorandum Opinion entered this day in the Harris case, Docket No. 48071, we have held that there was a statutory reorganization, have found as a fact that the Davis shareholder engaged in two separate transactions, one an exchange of each Davis share for six Stanley shares, and the other a sale of half the Stanley shares thus received for cash at $80 a share, and upon this finding of fact we have held that the Commissioner was in error in determining that the shareholder received for his Davis shares a combination consisting of Stanley shares and cash. We make the same decision here, and more specifically we find as a fact that the petitioners, being the owners of 60 and 5 Davis shares, respectively, exchanged them in 1926, pursuant to a plan of reorganization, for 330 Stanley shares, of which one-half, or 165 shares, were sold to Smith & Company for $13,200 cash.

Judgment will be entered under Rule 50.
Entered: Jan. 29, 1936.

[¶36,040].—LURLINE B. ROTH, Docket Nos. 63536, 71037 and 74693.
Herman Phleger, Esq., James S. Moore, Jr., Esq., and A. P. Robinson, C.P.A., for the petitioner.
J. L. Backstrom, Esq., for the respondent.

MEMORANDUM OPINION

MORRIS: The petitioner contests deficiencies in income tax of $16,172.11, $16,032.52 and $13,234.24 for the taxable years 1929, 1930 and 1931, respectively, alleging

error in the failure to permit the deduction of $42,389.59, $43,021.69 and $66,171.17 as losses sustained in said respective years in the operation of the Why-Worry Farm as a business enterprise.

The petitioner is an individual with residence in San Francisco, also Woodside, San Mateo County, California, where she maintains and operates Why-Worry Farm for the breeding of saddle horses. She has been intimately associated with the breeding, care, training, showing at horse shows and fairs, and the purchase and sale of horses since childhood, her father before her having bred standard horses. She has visited all important horse shows and fairs and places where horses are bred and sold—especially in Kentucky and Missouri—throughout the United States. She was the first exhibitor of horses at the California State Fair. She began with a few saddle horses some twenty-five years ago. Shortly before her marriage she acquired a few show and pleasure horses by gift from her mother. Her mother purchased a small show stable for her in 1922 which she showed for several years. In 1925 the petitioner selected, and her mother purchased for her, the world's champion show horse, a stallion, Chief of Longview, at a cost of $25,000. In or about 1927, at which time the demand for show and pleasure horses was great and after she had bred a couple of colts by this stallion, Chief of Longview, she realized the possibilities of a breeding farm in California. At that time, as now, there were no substantial interests of that character, that is, for the breeding and sale of saddle horses, in California, and notwithstanding a great local interest it was necessary to import such horses from Kentucky, Missouri or Tennessee.

She visited various farms in the east respecting possibilities of conducting a breeding farm, familiarized herself with their stock, their breeding methods, stud fees, cost of mares and colts, and having done so, concluded that such an enterprise would be profitable. At or about this time she purchased seven brood mares. She arranged for suitable quarters on the farm, built a stable and began the breeding business, for profit, in 1929 at Why-Worry Farm with seven colts, eleven brood mares, and eighteen stallions and show horses. She was so engaged throughout the taxable years. Fifty colts were born during the years 1929 to 1933, both inclusive, and twenty-four were sold during that period, leaving a total number of colts on hand at the end of 1933 of 33, together with 16 brood mares and 26 stallions and show horses. The petitioner derived gross income from show prizes, board of horses, stud fees, sale of horses and colts, and miscellaneous revenues of $31,383.17, $14,025.12 and $25,934.23, and incurred gross expenses of $73,772.76, $83,046.81 and $91,705.40, resulting in net losses of $42,389.59, $39,021.69 and $67,271.17—the latter figure including an adjustment of $1,500 occasioned by the loss of stock—for each of the respective taxable years 1929, 1930 and 1931.

The inventory values of brood mares, stallions, and show horses, computed upon the basis of appraised values in the case of horses on hand at January 1, 1929 which, in each case, are less than cost, and upon the basis of actual cost where acquired subsequently to January 1, 1929, including no value whatsoever for colts, the income from which is reported in its entirety upon sale, were $81,800, $103,350, and $136,900 on January 1, 1929, December 31, 1929 and December 31, 1930, respectively.

The books of account of the petitioner were very poorly kept prior to 1929. In the beginning of 1929, when she embarked upon her new venture, a complete modern set of double entry books was opened and has since been maintained by an experienced bookkeeper.

Petitioner employed from thirteen to seventeen people in her business between 1929 and 1931, including a manager whom she employed at the outset of this venture. She spends over six months of each year at her Woodside residence and when residing in San Francisco she visits her farm twice weekly, actively conducting the affairs of her breeding farm. She determines the purchase and sale prices of all horses, selects all employees, approves all bills before payment by her bookkeeper, decides which shows should be attended annually and what horses should be bred.

The respondent held, in each of the taxable years, that the operation of her breeding farm was a "hobby"; that it was not a business entered into for profit and, therefore, he disallowed the losses resulting therefrom.

Upon the record we disagree with the respondent. There is ample evidence of an intention upon the part of the petitioner to engage in the business of the breeding of horses in 1929 and that she was so engaged during the taxable years in controversy.

We are confident that the hobby element, which admittedly existed prior to 1929, became entirely secondary after January 1, 1929 when the petitioner, after thorough investigation, coupled with her years of experience in the handling of horses, decided to capitalize upon her broad experience and to embark upon what she had hoped and expected would be a profitable enterprise, i.e., the breeding of horses. Aside from the unequivocal testimony of the petitioner herself that she intended to enter into the breeding of horses for profit in 1929 and the fact that she was so engaged, we have the fact that she made a thorough investigation of all phases of the business, visited various farms in the east, familiarizing herself with their stock, their breeding methods, stud fees, cost of mares and colts, that she arranged for suitable quarters on the farm, built a stable, purchased brood mares and actually embarked upon the breeding of horses to the extent that fifty colts were born during the years 1929 to 1933. Some point is made of the fact that the petitioner actually incurred heavy losses; that because she is a woman of great wealth and because she continued to operate under such circumstances indicated that she had no expectation of profit. The record does not disclose that the petitioner was a woman of great wealth, although she may very well have been. She testified most emphatically that she would not have gone into the business had she not anticipated profits therefrom. She said that she did not expect profits in the beginning by reason of the fact that the brood mares had to mature before they could breed and that colts had to be bred before the business could hope to be profitable. How profitable the business may have been had it not begun at the outset of a world-wide depression, we leave to conjecture, but the fact that the business was markedly unprofitable is readily understood. There is also some point made that the petitioner continued to show horses after 1929 as she had theretofore. The petitioner explained that it was necessary as an advertising medium to attend these shows, even at great expense. The respondent erred in holding that the petitioner was not engaged in the breeding of horses as a business. Margaret E. Amory, 22 B.T.A. 1398; George D. Widener, 8 B.T.A. 651, affirmed at 33 Fed. (2) 833; Marshall Field, 26 B.T.A. 116, affirmed 67 Fed. (2) 876.

The petitioner concedes that the net income as found by the respondent should be increased by $2,900 because of an understatement of income for the taxable year 1930 of $4,000 and an overstatement in 1931 of $1,100. The claimed losses shall be adjusted accordingly.

Judgment will be entered under Rule 50

Entered Jan. 30, 1936.

IV AN INTERVIEW ON MATSON HISTORY, WITH KARL KORTUM* PRESENT

[Interview 4: November 13, 1980]##

Kortum: Is the microphone close enough? I always like to be close to the subject, close to the person with the wisdom!

Riess: Good, then we'll get all the cream and sugar out of the way and just make it as close and audible as possible.

Kortum: Captain Matson has always been a hero of mine because he was a sailor, for one thing, but in particular because he rose to command, and his personality and abilities became evident on the scow schooners on San Francisco Bay, a vanished class of ship--except for the Alma which we can see out of the windows here. Also, we have the stern of one scow schooner, the Charles W., in the museum.

So I have always been intensely interested in the William Frederick and the Mission Canal, Captain Matson's first two vessels on the Bay.

Roth: They're before my time!

Kortum: I'm well aware of that, but in the interview that you gave a long time ago with Erna Fergusson for a book called Our Hawaii, you mentioned something about Captain Rock being an associate of your father's, and when I read that, you said that Captain Matson went to work for Captain Rock on the William Frederick--Rock was the owner--and inside of two years Captain Matson was the owner. Which is about the way things went in the scow schooners.**

It's always bothered us that we have never been able to find a photograph of the William Frederick or the Mission Canal. What do you know about Captain Rock apart from that?

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*Karl Kortum, Chief Curator, National Maritime Museum, San Francisco. Interview took place at Ghirardelli Square Offices.

**Our Hawaii, by Erna Fergusson, Knopf, New York 1942. Excerpt appended.

Roth: I just know that he was with my father and Captain Rock is one of the ones where my father parked all his horses. I already said that my father bought horses when he shouldn't have been buying horses and so he had to park them around with these different captains and Captain Rock was one of the ones who had the largest group of horses.

Kortum: Was that at Rock's home here?

Roth: I believe Rock lived in Alameda.

Riess: Was he another Swedish captain?

Roth: Oh, he must have been. Oh, yes, he was Swedish I'm sure.

Riess: Do you say "must have been" because that is what ninety-nine percent of them were?

Roth: They were mostly Swedish.

Kortum: Three-quarters of our seafaring men were Scandinavian and the pattern which Captain Matson followed was characteristic. They came around Cape Horn in a British ship, probably having in mind jumping the ship when they got here, and going to work under better conditions. That is, in our coastal vessels or on the vessels on the Bay, which were numerous, the scow schooners.

Do you remember Captain Rock yourself?

Roth: Yes, I remember him. I know what he looked like, but I have no pictures of him.

Kortum: What did he look like?

Roth: He was sort of roundish in his face and he had a twinkle in his eye, I remember that. That's about all I remember. I remember his driving the horses--I think he died quite a number of years ago.

Kortum: [aside] We have a little piece from the Tacoma newspaper about him, a few paragraphs, which can be dropped into the story, and you can get that from us.*

Roth: There was a Captain Matson also.

Kortum: Charles Matson?

Roth: Yes, the same name.

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*Appended

Kortum: He was skipper of the Falls of Clyde to name just one vessel. What kind of man was Charles Matson? What did he look like?

Roth: Oh, he was different. As I remember, he had a beard. I think so. He was different from Rock. He was quiet.

Kortum: Was he the master when you made your voyage in the Falls of Clyde when you were sailing down to Hilo that time?

Roth: He must have been. Yes, I think that was the time we made the record sail in nine days and three hours and something!

Kortum: Nine days and three hours?

Roth: I think it was.

Riess: Your father admired this other Captain Matson?

Roth: He was very fond of his captains. I think they had all been his friends when he was younger and they probably all worked together.

Kortum: I think that was very much the case from everything I've heard.

Roth: They were really friends of his. It wasn't like employing somebody he didn't know.

Kortum: They had worked their way up on the coast.

Roth: --Because he was interested in their families and he was good to them always.

Kortum: Peter Johnson?

Roth: Peter Johnson, he was different. He was different.

Kortum: In what way was he different?

Roth: He liked his little drink.

Kortum: Well, that wasn't too different from a lot of them!

Roth: Oh, yes, but he liked it a little more than most of them. He had a wonderful sense of humor. I remember being late to make the ship in Hilo one time and they held the ship one hour and I didn't realize that on account of the tide, if I had been a half hour later, the ship wouldn't have gotten out. So when I came down in my Locomobile car, I went right on board in the car, never got out of the car. I was scared to death of Captain Johnson!

Roth: I had no sooner got to my room when he sent for me and I went up with my knees shaking and he said, "Do you realize the ship couldn't have gone out tonight if you hadn't arrived? You shouldn't have done this!" I hadn't realized it. "Well," he said, "Did you have a good time?" "Oh," I said, "I had a wonderful time." He said, "Then I won't tell anyone." [laughter] Which meant he wouldn't tell Mr. Tenney.

Kortum: You were just an hour late and almost spoiled the sailing?

Roth: I almost spoiled the sailing (which I didn't know).

Kortum: That would have been on a steamer.

Roth: Yes, it was one of the steamers because the car was hoisted aboard and I didn't get out. You're supposed to get out; you're not allowed to be lifted by the ship's boom. But I was scared to walk up the gangplank. I knew Captain Johnson was watching right up there.

Kortum: What did he look like?

Roth: Oh, he had sort of a narrow face and a prominent nose [laughs]--sometimes on the pink side! He was a great man though.

Kortum: Yes, he was a great favorite of your father's, I know, and survived out of the age of sail to take the ocean liners when liners came to be built.

Riess: In the Matson Navigation Company history that is being written, the author seems to set up a difference of opinion often between Captain Matson and Captain Johnson.*

Kortum: Well, seamen are like that. They can argue--

Roth: Captain Johnson was a little harder to keep in line than some of the other captains.

Kortum: Oh, was he? He wrote a memoir. He is the only one of the bunch that wrote a memoir. It's good to have.

Riess: That trip back from Hilo where you barely made the boat, you were on that one by yourself, without your mother?

Roth: I was with friends. I was married then.

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*Cargoes: Matson's First Century in the Pacific, by William L. Worden, University of Hawaii Press, 1981.

neg avail

Lurline Berenice Matson

neg avail

Voyage to Hawaii

neg avail

Captain William Matson

Christening the "Lurline"

Riess: And he was still taking you to task?

Roth: Oh, yes! He practically grew up in the family, so I was just another girl as far as he was concerned.

Kortum: I have noticed that captains at the time of the departure of a ship--getting all the pieces together and everybody together, and all the cargo on board, and all the fuel on board and all the stores and so on--it preys on a captain's mind. They become obsessed with sailing.

Roth: He was a real captain and ran a beautiful ship.

Kortum: You have mentioned before the story about creating the Matson flag, which is a very good story.

Roth: It must have been on the Falls of Clyde.

Kortum: We have a record of a Falls of Clyde voyage which may have been that one which I can supply you with to drop into the story.*

Roth: It was when the company was first formed and we had no house flag and my mother made it going down out of bits of flags that we had to sew together. She made the big M and the stars.

Kortum: The seven stars surrounding the M have traditionally been said to be the seven ships that Captain Matson first owned. So I've always been very interested in the story of the creation of the house flag on a voyage on a sailing ship down to Honolulu by the owner's wife!

Riess: Yes, was she piecing it out and figuring out the design right then and there?

Roth: Yes, we made it going down.

Kortum: Your father was along on that voyage.

Roth: He probably decided what he wanted and we worked it out.

Kortum: A family project.

Roth: It was a family project.

Kortum: Didn't you tell me there were some other ladies on board who did some sewing, too?

Roth: Yes, they were some friends of my mother's called Zabriskie. They were on board.

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*Appended

Riess: So they had a hand in the flag sewing?

Roth: Oh, yes. I think everybody had to help because you have to make the stars and the M.

Riess: Where is that flag?

Roth: It's on all the ships.

Riess: I mean the original one.

Kortum: It may not have been saved.

Roth: I doubt it. I think it's probably in tatters by now! This may have been on the Roderick Dhu. Could it be? I don't know.

Kortum: Speaking of the Roderick Dhu, Captain Rock had her for quite awhile and was very proud of her. Do you have any particular memories of that vessel?

Roth: Oh, yes, I have lots of them because we went many times on the Roderick Dhu. She was one of the biggest ships, carried the most mules.

Kortum: Yes, there was a big importation of mules from this coast on these sailing ships to Honolulu.

Riess: Mrs. Roth has painted a very unattractive picture of sailing with mules.

Roth: With the mule's head in the window!

Riess: --Drooling!

Kortum: Oh, I remember you telling me that.

Roth: Oh, it would make me so seasick.

Kortum: Were you in your cabin?

Roth: Yes, because we always had the front cabin which was supposed to be the best. But the good "mule" breezes came right in. [laughter]

Kortum: A mule would actually stick his nose through the porthole?

Roth: Yes, sure.

Kortum: It wouldn't be a square window; it would be a porthole.

Roth: Yes.

Kortum: Sticks his snout through! [more laughter] That could be unattractive. On the manifests there were always mules and cattle traveling down.

Roth: Horses, lots of horses.

Riess: I've been interested in the names of some of these ships. Do the ships carry a name forever?

Kortum: Well, it's changed frequently but the Roderick Dhu is a very distinguished iron clipper from the Waverly Line--Williamson, Milligan and Co. I think they were a Glasgow firm, and the vessels all drew their names from the Waverly novels of Sir Walter Scott. They had names like Kenilworth and Red Gauntlet, Roderick Dhu.*

The Falls Line was another Glasgow line of sailing ships. They had nine sailing vessels, the Falls of Clyde, Falls of Afton, the Falls of Dee, the Falls of Halladale--in other words, the waterfalls of Scotland.

Roth: Nice names.

Kortum: Nice names. The Falls of Clyde is a lovely name, but so is Roderick Dhu, a figure in The Lady of the Lake.

Mrs. Roth, did you make many voyages down?

Roth: We always did two a year, anyway, or three--two or three a year.

Riess: It was generally, I gather, smooth sailing down and a struggle back?

Kortum: It's a little longer coming back.

Roth: Anytime you leave San Francisco, it is not smooth sailing.

Kortum: That's true, but you made a little quicker trip going down than coming back.

Roth: Oh, yes, going down the winds are more favorable as a rule.

Riess: Were there really bad crossings that you remember, any alarming ones?

Roth: One was very alarming because we were carrying dynamite.

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*Also Knight of Snowden, Talisman, Marmion, Lord of the Isles, Ivanhoe, Cedric the Saxon, Lammermoor. The Lammermoor was wrecked in Bodega Bay in the early 1880s. KK

Riess: Was that unusual cargo?

Roth: Yes. I have an idea it was against the law.

Kortum: It's not supposed to be carried in passenger ships.

Roth: That's it and there were six passengers, I suppose. We had the most dreadful storm and my father moved that dynamite all night long, I remember.

Kortum: He actually moved it?

Roth: He moved it all night long from side to side and he was really nervous. He had his family on board. He was really upset. It's the only time I've ever seen him alarmed.

Kortum: The dynamite was probably getting adrift.

Roth: Getting adrift and he was trying to secure it.

Riess: How many of you were privy to this?

Roth: Oh, he didn't tell anyone.

Kortum: Really?

Roth: [laughs] No, not until the next morning when the storm was over. But he was up all night and he was not the captain. He was not the captain, but he had it on board and he knew he shouldn't have had it on board.

Kortum: But the seaman in him came out and he went down in the hold.

Roth: Yes, he really worked that night.

Riess: Of course, he could have jettisoned it. That might have been a good idea.

Roth: No, you couldn't. In a sailing ship you're rolling. It would be worse. It would blow the ship up when it bounced back and hit the ship.

Kortum: Yes, putting it overboard would be difficult.

Roth: You couldn't get rid of it if you tried.

Riess: That's a pretty good story. What other contraband cargo can you tell us about?

Roth: That's the only thing I ever heard of.

Kortum: I don't know the regulations, but I know that in a passenger-carrying steamer, you are not supposed to be carrying dynamite. So this was a passenger-carrying sailing ship and thus slipped by.

Roth: I think there were probably only six passengers. It was one of the older ships.

Kortum: It could have been the Falls of Clyde or the Roderick Dhu.

Roth: Yes, it could have been one of those.

Kortum: Did you make any voyages in the Santiago?

Roth: Oh, I'm sure I must have been on all of the ships. I recall mostly the Falls of Clyde and the Roderick Dhu. We went on the bigger ones, my mother was such a poor sailor.

Kortum: How did she like all of these numerous voyages every year?

Roth: She didn't like them much; she hated them.

Kortum: Did she get seasick?

Roth: Yes, terribly, but my father knew how to take care of you when you were seasick.

Riess: What was that? I'd like to know.

Roth: Well, in those days they didn't have pills. You got a hot compress on your stomach.

Kortum: And it worked? I never heard that.

Roth: A hot compress; it was generally his underwear, his good Jaeger underwear which was very expensive. He would tear it up and make a compress and put it on mother's stomach.

Kortum: Jaeger, that's woolen.

Roth: It was old-fashioned but it was good.

Riess: How about the old tried and true tea and dry crackers?

Roth: Dry crackers and a chicken sandwich is the best really. A nice chicken sandwich works the best. No liquids, no tea.

Kortum: Basically his cure was an external one.

Roth: Yes, mostly--and expensive. His good Jaeger underwear!

Kortum: Woolen underwear is precious to a seaman.

Do you recall then voyages on the Enterprise, the steamer, as distinct from the sailing ships?

Roth: Yes, the Enterprise, I remember the first trip sailing out here and we were just beyond Treasure Island when the engine stopped.

Kortum: She was an old steamer.

Roth: But she was the first one that ever went out with oil (oil fuel instead of coal). That was the first trip and really, my father was pretty nervous. It was some little thing that was quickly fixed.

Riess: It didn't make him turn around and come back and figure out what had gone wrong?

Roth: Oh, no I don't think he wanted to turn around.

Kortum: The whole eyes of the waterfront would be on an experiment like that.

Roth: It was the first trip and I think the Roderick Dhu was the first ship that went out with cold storage and electricity. She was the first ship with electricity and the first ship with cold storage on the West Coast.

Riess: Then would you have been taking any kind of bulk in that cold storage that you would be delivering to the Islands?

Roth: I don't know what he took down.

Kortum: I don't know whether that was an ice box for the food. I suspect that was the case. And electric lights to make the passengers' life a little better, easier. These were sailing ships carrying passengers.

The thought of making a sailing ship voyage had a kind of cachet to it and people would come to San Francisco to make this kind of voyage down to the Islands. That was an experience--even though steamers were running and provided a much more prosaic trip.

Roth: For entertainment you played shuffleboard.

Kortum: On the sailing ships, too? Somebody laid out the markings on the deck?

Roth: The boy laid them out.

Riess: How far back do you know of this tradition of shuffleboard on ships?

Kortum: I don't know. I can't answer that, but it's a good shipboard game. I've not heard of it on sailing ships before, but it makes sense.

Roth: Yes, we played on sailing ships. In fact, I have pictures of it, but the pictures are so dim.

Kortum: We'd like the chance to make a copy of them. We know how to copy dim pictures. That would be very interesting because as I say I have never heard of it before on a sailing ship.

Roth: Yes, and we wore veils around our hair. We were right out on the deck of the ship, not like a steamer where you are protected by side glass. So it was always windy.

Kortum: I've looked at the book you mentioned, the Matson history, from the standpoint of sailing ship history basically and I thought they treated the scow schooners, which I have such an interest in, very badly, and called them barges. They weren't barges!

Roth: Oh, they're not barges? I've always called them barges. That's what I said: "My father ran a barge up the San Francisco--"

Kortum: No, they're a sailing ship--a schooner--a two-masted sailing ship. The barge confusion comes from the fact they had a square bow and a square stern.

Roth: That's right, because a barge is towed, isn't it?

Kortum: A barge is towed. But these had a square front end and so somebody might call them a barge, but they weren't faintly a barge. They were sailing ships. Not only that, but many of them were very smart vessels, well built and good looking and well kept up. When they had races on the Bay on the Fourth of July, they would beat the yachts, some of them. They were fast. So they are a very interesting class of vessel.

Roth: Oh, I'm so glad to hear that.

Riess: Do they have their origin on this coast?

Kortum: Scow-hulled vessels appear here and there throughout the world.

Roth: I think they probably have them in Holland.

Kortum: They have them on the East Coast in some places and they have them in New Zealand. But they had their most intensive development here on San Francisco Bay starting in the Gold Rush. There were some four hundred of them built here.

Riess: You were saying before, Mr. Kortum, that there was great cachet in taking a sailing voyage to Hawaii, but not on a steamer?

Kortum: Well, there were steamers running down there other than Matson steamers if I remember rightly in that first decade of this country. The Matson Enterprise. And other Matson steamers got into the trade. But the sailing ship trade had a certain style--people heard about it and it was nice to take a trip on a sailing ship.

Roth: Like you make a cruise.

Kortum: Yes, like you make a cruise now. It was different; a pleasant life.

Riess: What did the various companies do to entertain people, to make one more attractive than the other.

Roth: You did your own entertainment and you had a show at the last captain's dinner, but it was all gotten up amongst the group. You always found a lot of talent. So there was always something. But as far as music, if you wanted to dance, maybe one of the crew could play an accordian or fiddle.

Riess: I should think very early there would be some kind of competition among the ships.

Kortum: No, this was a very minor aspect of the whole thing.

Riess: Was it a profitable aspect of the whole thing?

Kortum: I guess it helped. The ships were basically moving cargo and bringing sugar back and taking mules down and so on and much other cargo. This added a little.

Roth: I don't think they made money on the passengers.

Riess: Not enough money to motivate them to beef the whole thing up.

Roth: No, not to send an entertainer like they do now, because there weren't enough passengers.

Kortum: The capacity of the ship was small for passengers--six or eight or a dozen maybe at the most.

Roth: With twelve people, you don't make money.

Kortum: When you worked up a little entertainment at the end of one of these sailing ship voyages, that was in the cabin after dinner?

Roth: Oh, yes, in the main cabin after dinner. Our cabins weren't very big. Somebody might play the piano, sing a song, dance--

Kortum: Give a recitation, a poem or something?

Roth: That's it.

Riess: A piano was--

Roth: Yes, they always had a piano. I think every ship had a piano.

Kortum: The cabin would be much like the one on Balclutha. Even though that's a small cabin, she had a piano.

Did the captain play, as he does on a larger scale in steamers, the host at dinner?

Roth: Oh, yes, there was a little bit of that.

Kortum: Those captains couldn't have been just dour old windjammer men. They must have had personality.

Roth: They did, they all had personality.

Riess: They must not have had just any old cook then if they were really taking passengers.

Roth: They always had pretty good meals--plain. Not like you have now, a choice of three entrees. If you had hash, you had hash, and if you had steak, you had steak. There weren't many choices, but it was good.

Riess: Was it like an English ship with bouillon and tea inbetween the three main [meals]?

Roth: Oh, yes, you had bouillon at 11:00. That even started way back, and they still carry that on on the cruise ships. They serve bouillon. It's the best part of the morning.

Kortum: Do you recall any other aspects about the food, [like] running short going down there on a long voyage?

Roth: You see, when we went on the sailing ships I was really a little girl and so I didn't care so much about the food.

Kortum: Can you cast any light on that story about that shipwreck? I forget the name of the vessel--Serena or something like that.

Roth: The Lurline?

Kortum: No, this was in the interview you made about twenty years ago by this Erna Fergusson [and] published in the book Our Hawaii. There was a shipwreck in Hilo in the harbor and Captain Matson is in command and everybody is saved and that's where he met Miss Low.

Roth: Yes, that was on the Lurline.

Riess: Yes, that was the Lurline, Mr. Kortum.*

Kortum: No, no, because the Lurline survived until 1915.

Roth: Oh, but she only just went on the rock for a little while. She wasn't really wrecked. It was off of Lapihoihoi. Lapihoihoi is a very rough spot and I think there's a rock that sticks out and she hit the rock, but the ship was not wrecked. They got her off with a tug and he got my mother off first, because that was the trip that he met my mother and fell in love with her. Mother was on her way to the Hakilau plantation to teach school.

Kortum: That should be easy to confirm by an historian. There must be a newspaper account of it.

Roth: Oh, I'm sure. I have a painting, a beautiful painting.

Kortum: Of what?

Roth: Of the Lurline on the rock, a little one done by that famous painter. I don't know who to give that too--would that be good for your museum?

Kortum: That's our meat.

Roth: Is that your meat?

Kortum: Yes, very much so.

Roth: I have it in Hawaii and it's done by--Coulter? No, it would be before Coulter.

Kortum: There was Joseph Lee.

Roth: Tavernier, I think. Anyway, it's done by one of the good painters and I have it in Hawaii and I think I better bring it up and give it to you.

Kortum: We would much appreciate that.

Roth: It shows her on the rocks.

Kortum: In this fix.

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*See discussion, pp. 8, 10.

Roth: And it's the Lurline.

Kortum: Your father probably had it painted because the romance started there.

Roth: His romance started there because after I was born he never went to sea. But when he was first married he did go to sea for a couple of months, I think; maybe six months.

Riess: You've said that before. Why didn't he go to sea?

Kortum: He was becoming an owner.

Roth: Because he became an owner. He couldn't be a sea captain and own several ships. You see, by then they were increasing.

Kortum: He had to run the company, line up cargoes-- If he is ambitious and wants to turn into an owner, he has got to stay ashore and look after his fleet and find captains and organize the whole thing.

Roth: Because his venture of buying his first steamer, the Enterprise, was quite a thing for him. He was really proud when she came sailing in.

Kortum: Another problem with that book I've mentioned in one of my notes to those people down there*--the American merchant marine was just dead at that time, dead. There was an enterprising group on the East Coast who were old-time sailing ship operators, the Dearborns and Laphams. They got the American-Hawaiian line started and built new steamers. They had the concept of going around South America, not around the Horn, but through the Straits of Magellan, with a regular scheduled steamer service. It was a very bold enterprise. But back there they were old established people in the shipping game. Anyway, that was the major--

Roth: And old families--

Kortum: Old families, and theirs was virtually--with the exception of Captain Matson's effort out here--was virtually the American merchant marine. At least, in steam. So for William Matson, starting as a sailor, to get a fleet of steamers going in the first decade of this century was quite a piece of work. It took courage and he must have had a remarkably persuasive personality to--

Roth: They say when he went back to buy the Enterprise at auction that it went much higher than he expected and much higher than he was authorized to spend the money for. But he bought it anyway and he

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*Refers to Mr. Perry at Alexander & Baldwin Co. in Hawaii.

Roth: said he looked so determined [laughs] that they decided it was no use bidding against him any longer! So he got his Enterprise! I know he was just terribly proud when she came into the Bay. She had been fixed up because she was an old ship. I don't know that the Enterprise was old, but she had been wrecked and had to be all redone.

Kortum: It was at least fifteen years old, I think.

But that was his first steamer and within a few years I think he had the Hyades built and the ones at Newport News. But that effort on this coast for a man--as I say, starting as a sailor--and able to attract that capital to build a line of steamers--

Roth: It took a lot of doing.

Kortum: And this book doesn't say that.

Roth: It doesn't?

Kortum: It doesn't say that and it should. It should comment on the state of the American merchant marine--that the only ray of hope on the East Coast was the American-Hawaiian, and the fact that Captain Matson had an equivalent thing going out here with much fewer resources. The investment money out here was not as it was back east. So it was remarkable.

Riess: Did he have connections with the East Coast?

Kortum: Oh, I'm sure he kept all sorts--

Roth: My father was friendly. He made friends, he made good friends.

Riess: Investors on the East Coast?

Roth: Oh, no investment on the East Coast. The investors were all out here.

Kortum: But he had a strong connection with the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company who built very fine ships for him. They were a first class American yard and continued to be for many, many years.

Riess: Your son is writing a book about what?

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[continued from a conversation off-tape about William Matson Roth]

Roth: I have no idea. I haven't the faintest idea! I think he has changed his mind several times and that's why there is no book.

Kortum: I think he should do better than I do; he should get on with it.

Roth: He writes every day on his book but it will never be finished.

Kortum: He writes beautifully. I have read some of the pieces he has written on building too many highrises in San Francisco and, oh, he can really handle the language.

Kortum: I wanted to ask about your home. Where did you live when the earthquake struck? You were in the city.

Roth: [At] 1918 Jackson which is where the Swedish embassy is now.

Kortum: You were living there in that brick house--

Roth: No, it wasn't brick. It was a white wooden house.

Kortum: A white Victorian, I suppose.

Roth: Yes, it was.

Kortum: So that's the one in this Fergusson piece where the whole experience of the earthquake hits you--and that didn't burn.

Roth: That didn't burn, but it came to Franklin.

Kortum: Yes, it came awfully close.

Roth: So we had the warning and my father came in that night on one of the ships from Honolulu. It was anchored in the Bay. I've forgotten which; one of the Spreckels ships was anchored in the Bay the second day or the night of the fire, I guess. He hired an old man, a colored fellow, with a white horse and found his family.

Kortum: Where did he find his family?

Roth: We were at the riding school sleeping in the sandlot with the fleas. [laughter]

Kortum: Where was the riding school?

Roth: Near the park, the St. Francis Riding School. It's still there, the same old place.

Mother had to get our horses out of Kelly's Stable which burned down and we were the last to get the horses out from upstairs. Our horses were upstairs.

Kortum: Where was Kelly's Stable?

Roth: On either Pine or Bush, one of those streets between Van Ness and Franklin. That was the private stable where everybody kept their horses. I had two saddle horses there and we had a pair of horses. I remember Mr. Kelly saying to Mother, "Mrs. Matson, I'm getting things out to take care of the wounded and I just can't take care of you at all." So Mother got her own horses out. She got somebody to help her and we tied the two saddle horses in the back. We had a two-seated rig and we tied the two saddle horses behind and drove up to Alta Plaza where we had pitched a tent, I think the first tent out in the city. The reason for the tent is that my grandfather was ill with heart trouble and had a trained nurse and we had to get him someplace.

Riess: Did you already have the tent?

Roth: We had the tent in the house. Everybody had a tent in those days, to go camping; camping was the thing, so you had a tent. So we had the first tent up so we could put Grandpa and the nurse in it. Then we stayed there until the fire became so close we couldn't contain the horses anymore. So then we had to go somewhere, so we went to the riding school. Mother drove and I hung on to the two riding horses and my grandfather kept saying, "This is nothing compared with the earthquake of '68." [laughter] "You should have been here for that!"

Kortum: He was in the rig?

Roth: Yes, he and the trained nurse, and that was one time Mother didn't want advice. It was pretty tough driving a spirited pair of horses and me hanging on to two more in back.

Then the army took the two saddle horses and I never saw them for four months afterwards.

Riess: They conscripted them?

Roth: Yes, after we got out to the riding school they took them almost immediately.

Kortum: But you had quite a bit of scrambling to do to get from Jackson Street to the stables.

Roth: Yes, we walked, I guess.

Kortum: That's four or five blocks, isn't it, at least?

Roth: I don't know what side street the stables were on. It must have been Bush or Pine, one of those.

Riess: Were you carrying valuables?

Roth: Nothing, nothing. My father arrived. He had been to the house. He said, "You left the front door open and you never took a thing out of the house. You left your jewelry, you left everything."

Riess: But he must have appreciated your instinct for getting to the horses!

Roth: No, I don't think he appreciated it at all. I think he thought we were crazy. [laughter] Well, he had been on the ship. He hadn't felt the earthquake.

Kortum: But your first move was to move your grandfather up to Alta Plaza.

Roth: Yes, we got him out of the house.

Kortum: Before you went to the stable?

Roth: Yes, oh, yes. We didn't go to the stable until after lunch when it looked like the fire was going to burn across Van Ness.

In those days the people from Hawaii stayed at--what was that hotel? Not the Palace, the biggest one, but a smaller hotel . . . Well, they all came and stayed at our house. We had about twelve people living in our house.

Kortum: When you went back?

Roth: They moved into our house because it was an old-fashioned house and had big water tanks in the attic, and right after the earthquake Mother went up and turned off the valve. So we had two tremendous water tanks. Water was short and all the people who were from Honolulu who had to move out of their hotel, moved into our house.

Kortum: Who would be some of those people, or don't you recall?

Roth: I've forgotten.

Kortum: Is what subsequently happened that that house was torn down and the brick house was built?

Roth: No, the brick house was built after my father died. One house was built. There were two houses and one house was built first. Then it was too big for my mother. So she gave the big house to me and she built another house next door by the same architect.

Kortum: It looks like one house, it does indeed. That is the site of the previous wooden house?

Roth: Yes, the site, but it's the site of two wooden houses; first, our original house, and then my father didn't want them to put an apartment next to him, so he bought the house next door and he also bought the house on the corner to be sure! [chuckles] So we had two empty houses next to us.

Kortum: The building of the brick house, was that your father's concept to build it?

Roth: No, that was built after he died because he had bought that house without even asking my mother. It couldn't have been a more inconvenient, big house. It was big and very inconvenient to live in and Mother never liked it. But he never asked her. He just said she had wanted a new house and he thought it was a nice house, so he bought it.

Riess: So how was the transition? The one brick house was built and then the--

Roth: The other was built about five years later.

Riess: Then you were able to stay in the wooden house until the brick house was completed?

Roth: Oh, no, Mother rented an apartment.

Kortum: The first brick house was her concept? Was that what she wanted in the way of a house?

Roth: Yes, she wanted it.

Riess: After the earthquake, I guess wood and brick were probably both in some disrepute.

Roth: Oh, I said to my father that I would never live in a house that had fallen down. Well, the chimneys and the windows broke, but it was a well-built house. There weren't any major repairs, we just had to fix the attic.

In the meantime my father built a house for me.

Kortum: Where was that?

Roth: That's on Jackson Street between Steiner and Buchanan. It's still there. My father built that after I was married. It was finished before he died.

Kortum: He died in 1917, I think.

Roth: In '17 because I remember I had got my Mason piano on the by-the-month payment and that sure caused a disaster.

Riess: Why?

Roth: My father came over for dinner and I said, "This is my new piano. Don't you love it?" He said, "Where did you get it?" I said, "I bought it." He said, "How did you pay for it?" I said, "By the month; it will take two years to pay for it." He had never done a thing like that in his life and he said, "Never, to the end of your life, do you do anything like that again. If you can afford it, you buy it; if you can't afford it, you don't buy it. You should always pay for what you get."

Kortum: That's a very simple rule.

Roth: A simple rule, but it is a good rule because you pay twice as much in the end.

Riess: True, but he was probably paying back investors all the time under the same kinds of terms.

Roth: Oh, yes, that's a different thing! [laughs] That was for him.

Kortum: According to the Erna Fergusson interview which I thought was a very nice one, your father liked to discuss matters with you, business matters I would gather, to some degree.

Roth: Yes, he did. He did every night. As a matter of fact, they would even ring me up from the office to ask if my father discussed [a matter] and to give them an idea on which way he was going. [laughter] I think he did it probably because if he discussed the same thing with my mother, she might have made suggestions. Being young, I didn't. I listened and didn't answer. So I think maybe he was just getting things off his chest. He couldn't talk at the office and this was a way of getting things off his mind.

Riess: Then you weren't supposed to be a kind of confidante?

Roth: No, I didn't think so. He never said, "Don't tell," but he was just always talking over little problems.

Riess: The more I hear about your mother, she sounds like she would have opinions and she was a very strong individual.

Roth: Yes, Mother was very opinionated, and she was smart and she would no doubt have had an opinion. But I don't think an opinion is what he wanted. He wanted to get things off his chest. He was superstitious too.

Kortum: Yes, sailors usually are.

Roth: Most Swedes and sailors are very superstitious. He believed in his dreams--and his dreams came true. I told you before they did.

Riess: About your mother's good organization, this response to the earthquake emergency--going and turning off the water and all of that--did people in the city at that time know what they would do in the event of an earthquake? Was an earthquake always a present danger?

Roth: We never thought of it. We had all been to the opera and heard Caruso the night before.

Kortum: Oh, the famous Caruso visit.

Riess: Yet she did know to go upstairs and turn off the water and--

Roth: Well, that's just housekeeping.

Riess: I guess so, but there might have been a lot more hysterical reaction.

Roth: No, she wasn't hysterical.

Kortum: What do you remember of the vibration of the house?

Roth: I just thought it was awful. I couldn't run out of the house quick enough.

Kortum: Did the chimneys crash down?

Roth: Chimney [were] crashing down. But it was a well-built house, so we didn't have any walls that went. Cracks we had and all the chimneys down and windows broken, but really no walls down.

Riess: Did you have help in the house then and did they scatter?

Roth: I don't remember. Chinese, we must have had Chinese.

Riess: It sounds like she was very good with the horses.

Roth: Oh, she was as good a driver as my father, because they used to race home a lot.

Kortum: Race home from where?

Roth: When we were at Leeside over there at Mills College. We kept horses at Fruitvale and took the train to Fruitvale and then drove from Fruitvale home. Mother kept her horse there and my father kept his and they would take the same train home. They always had a little race, but nobody ever got ahead of my father.

Riess: Which one would you ride with under those circumstances?

Roth: I don't remember; probably my father.

Kortum: Was he driving a double span?

Roth: A double, or a single generally. He could drive a double. We had enough horses for it.

Kortum: Maybe you can comment on your father's love of his horses. He is famous for it.

Roth: That he was. He just loved them. It finally got so that my mother would not allow me to go to an auction sale with my father because she said I encouraged him to buy--which was true.

Kortum: You would see a horse that appealed to you--

Roth: It appealed to me and my father would say, "How do you like it?" And I'd love it. Then we'd have it and then Captain Rock would get another horse to take care of!

Kortum: To board.

Roth: To board.

Riess: You said he [Rock] had a twinkle in his eye and I thought maybe that was because he was a co-conspirator.

Roth: Oh, I'm sure he liked them too.

Kortum: "They're stashing away another horse in Alameda!" [laughter]

Roth: He would not tell Mother about it unless he had to.

Kortum: These sessions with your father, would he come up to your room and talk to you or where did he sit down and discuss his plans and problems? Where would this be in the house?

Roth: In the library.

Kortum: You would sit and he would say, "I'm considering buying the Welch line of sailing ships, and they're pretty old vessels and I'll dispose of them."

Roth: Yes, that's it. He would tell me how much it was going to cost and then all of the problems and the people on the board that were against it and the ones that were for it.

Roth: I'll never forget when he had his first stroke, I guess it was. (I don't know whether it was a stroke or heart.) Dr. Herzstein came in and my father said, "There are a lot of important things down on the dock and I'd like to know when I can get up."

Herzstein said, "Well, Captain, I guess if you take it easy, maybe in about three weeks."

Well, my father burst into such laughing that they were worried about him! And in one week he was out.

Kortum: Did that have a bad effect on his health?

Roth: It didn't matter. He didn't care. I went down behind him, holding onto his coattail. Finally I got one of the policemen and said, "Would you please stand near my father because here he is, up out of bed, and just at the edge of the wharf"--you know, watching how the ship is getting along. So the policeman did.

Kortum: He was frail?

Roth: Of course, he was frail. He was supposed to be in bed three weeks and he was out in a week.

Kortum: Watching the arrival or the departure of the ships?

Roth: Yes, or there may have been a strike. He was very determined that way.

Kortum: You were hanging on to his coattail?

Roth: I was hanging on. I was actually hanging on without his feeling it because here he was right at the edge and kind of wobbly and I knew he was wobbly. He didn't care.

Kortum: In these discussions of the business with your father, what comment would you put in? You must have said something once in awhile.

Roth: I didn't say anything.

Kortum: You weren't trying to shape his decisions?

Roth: No, because I had the feeling that it was relief for him. After it had gone on for so many years, you couldn't help but have that feeling.

Kortum: How long would a session like this be, a half an hour?

Roth: Oh, maybe fifteen minutes or a half hour.

Kortum: Would this be after dinner possibly?

Roth: Yes, or breakfast in the morning. We always had breakfast together.

Riess: Did he use your husband [William P. Roth] as an ear also?

Roth: No.

Riess: It went on after you were married--

Roth: I was only married a year [before he died].

Riess: I am thinking of that period of time.

Roth: No.

Riess: But he might still have wished to discuss things with you in that time?

Roth: Yes.

Kortum: Your husband went on to pioneer in the tourist business.

Roth: Yes, most people don't give Bill enough credit.

Kortum: There was that fine article in Fortune Magazine. That really told the story quite well.*

Roth: Yes, have you seen that?

Riess: No, when was that?

Kortum: We have it at the museum in the library. It tells of the expansion under Mr. Roth--really getting rolling on the tourist trade and the trans-Pacific liners.

Roth: He realized with these big ships that the people, the tourists, going to Hawaii had to have some place to stay when they got there.

Then Matson tried to get into the airplane business which didn't work out.

Kortum: What was the scene in Hilo when you arrived down there first? Was it a pretty primitive place?

Roth: Yes, you didn't go to a dock. You went ashore in a row boat.

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*Fortune Magazine, Vol. 16 #3, September, 1937.

Kortum: Was it one of the ship's boats or did somebody row out from shore?

Roth: No, it was one of the ship's boats. The ship lowered its boats and the passengers went ashore and you went up the Wailuku River [sp.?]. That is the river that goes up by the plantation; it was rough going ashore.

Kortum: Rough in a sense that the harbor could be rough?

Roth: Yes, very. They did not have the breakwater then. The breakwater was built later. Hilo Bay was open water, really, and it was very rough, very rough.

Kortum: So the sailing ship would work in under sail. Was there a tug, do you remember? You must have had a tug.

Roth: No, I don't think so. I think most all our captains had pilot's licenses and I think now the law is that you have to have a pilot. But in those days, you didn't have to have a pilot if you had a pilot's license. But it was, oh, so rough going to shore, and generally raining because it rains every other day in Hilo. For a bit, anyway.

Kortum: Hilo was a port where your father saw opportunities. Honolulu was well developed, but the thought that this place could be--

Roth: Yes, because there was nobody in Hilo and in Honolulu you had the other line. What was it?

Kortum: Oceanic?

Roth: Oceanic.

Kortum: Yes, the Spreckels line. When you got ashore in those early visits, for example, what did you do?

Roth: We generally stayed with a Mrs. Severence and she had kind of a boarding house. You would call it a motel now. They had their own house and also cottages.

Kortum: Where did you eat, at a communal table?

Roth: That was in the very beginning, but most of the time we stayed at plantations because most of the cargo we carried was for either Hakalau or one of the big plantations.

We stayed with the Scotts, friends of ours.

Kortum: They would invite you as guests to their home?

Roth: As a matter of fact, I went to school with--all those big plantations had very good schools for their children because there were no schools in Hilo. So they had tutors from Harvard or Yale or Cornell, especially Cornell. Their own children, and the children of the top people in their offices would come to the school.

Riess: That was the kind of school where your mother had been going to teach.

Roth: Yes, that's where Mother was going to teach. She had twelve children.

Riess: The expense of a tutor from Harvard or Yale--

Roth: That was carried by the plantation.

Often when we went down, Mother and I would stay over one trip. It's kind of a long sailing trip just to go for three or four days. The ship stays there and then the ship would come back maybe a month later or two months and I would just go to school there.

Kortum: You had to resume your schooling?

Roth: I would just go back to school.

Riess: That could have been a very good schooling experience.

Roth: Oh, it was. All those children went to--most of them went to Yale and Cornell. There weren't many from Harvard, but a group of them went to Cornell.

Kortum: When you stayed in the boarding house in the early voyages--

Roth: I can't remember now. I was very little then.

Kortum: You don't remember everybody at a big table?

Roth: No, I don't remember. I just remember mosquitoes and mosquito nets. We slept under mosquito nets. I remember that and I remember being terribly frightened left alone in the cottage while they all were at dinner.

Kortum: Where did you get your dinner?

Roth: I don't know. I had it, I'm sure.

Riess: [Were you] more frightened than you would be ordinarily? Was there something strange about being--

Roth: Well, it was in the cottage and raining and mosquitoes and a mosquito net! [laughter] I was very little then.

Kortum The town didn't amount to anything at all, Hilo?

Roth: Water used to run down the streets and I used to sail boats in the gutter coming down the street. It would just pour down because it rains there all the time. But it was a wonderful old town. Everything went on in the drug store like a small town. They had ice cream sodas and all the gossip. Then, in Hilo, everybody went to church all day Sunday.

Riess: Presbyterian?

Roth: Congregational.

Kortum: When you were sailing boats in the gutter, presumably that was while you were in the boarding house.

Roth: Oh, yes, I was just a little kid then. I remember at the Scotts we sang hymns after dinner. We sang hymns after lunch, too.

Kortum: Every day?

Roth: No, on Sunday. It was just a hymn day.

Riess: Did each plantation have its minister?

Roth: No, no, no, you went to the village church.

Riess: Did the natives seem strange? Were they speaking a pidgin English? Would you have any kind of relations with them at all? Were they part of the reason that you thought it was scary?

Roth: No, I wouldn't think they were strange. There was always pidgin English, now the same as then! [laughter]

Kortum: You told me once before about going aloft presumably on the Falls of Clyde and your father--

Roth: Sliding out on the yard. If I ate my mush that was my treat!

Kortum: You were allowed to climb aloft.

Roth: I was allowed to go with my father and slide out on the yard.

Kortum: That's on a foot rope. It's the little wire rope under the yard you are standing on and you are holding onto this big spar.

Roth: No, you are sitting on it.

Kortum: Oh, you straddled the yard.

Roth: You slide out.

Riess: Sidesaddle!

Kortum: No, not sidesaddle; straddling it.

Riess: Oh, I thought she meant with her legs over, straddling it that way.

Kortum: I imagine one leg on one side and one on the other.

Roth: No, both legs on the same side. My father would slide out and I would slide next to him. He could do that. [laughs] I had great confidence in him, I guess, when I think of it! I think it was the worst idea I could ever have had. I've never had mush since!

Riess: That's when you should have been holding onto his coattails.

Roth: I thought I had more sense! [laughter]

Kortum: We just put a yard on display on the porch of the museum. You might take a look at it. It could bring back old times!

Roth: Yes, see how I liked to go out on it.

Well, the ship would be just going easy; not on a rough day, but on an easy day. All the sailors had to go out that way.

How do you [Kortum] go down a ladder? I go down a ladder this way, with my face towards you and the ladder behind me. Is that a sailor's way?

Kortum: No, not with the ladder behind you.

Roth: That's the way I would go down the ladder. I don't know how I learned that.

Kortum: Facing outward?

Roth: Outward with my arms through; it's the safest way. You get to the edge and you're facing the edge, and I put my arm through and I can go down quick that way.

Kortum: Different ships, different long splices! [laughter]

Roth: That's it.

Kortum: Do you remember anything about the personality of the cooks on any of these vessels? The cook is frequently a character on board.

Roth: No, I don't. I should.

Kortum: I know there was a steward aboard who waited on table.

Roth: But the cabin boy was always very important because he really ran everything. He was the one that washed out--of course, now they have just deck boys, but it would be your cabin boy who would be a deck boy, too, on those early ships.

Riess: Was this when you had passengers that there was this assigned role?

Kortum: He would be making the bunks and--

Roth: He would make the beds and bring you your beef tea at eleven. He would be doing everything really. They made quite a bit of it because it was more profitable for them, of course, if they could give very good service. Those cabin boys were really wonderful boys.

Riess: Were they Chinese?

Roth: No, probably Swedes.

Riess: They get tipped at the end of the voyage though.

Roth: Yes.

Kortum: I have not been to sea much as a passenger, but I recall what a great event in the passenger's life the meals are. You really look forward to a meal. It's a highlight.

Roth: That still goes on. I think the reason people take the cruises is to eat: they're always <u>eating</u>.

Kortum: Do you recall on the sailing ships the same anticipation of a meal and a meal being--

Roth: Yes, I think so. But the food wasn't the same as what they serve now.

Kortum: I think we've covered quite a bit. It's been a pleasure.

Mrs. William P. Roth

V RED CROSS WORKS, AND OTHER INTERESTS

[Interview 5: December 17, 1980] ##

Red Cross Volunteer Chairman

Riess: I see that one of your areas of interest over the years has been the Red Cross.

Roth: I always had some charity before I was married, and when I was first married I always did something. One was the Presbyterian Orphanage, which is now Edgewood. Before I was married, I used to play the piano for the dancing class. And I worked with--what was that we had in San Francisco where you delivered meals? It's not in existence now. It was one of our big charities.

Riess: The San Francisco public dance hall was a concern of some of the women.

Roth: No, I just did for the Edgewood girls. Tillie with the Wand. You never heard of Tillie with the Wand?

Riess: No.

Roth: Well, then, you've never heard Mr. Folger. Mr. Folger, being a club member, used to get up at parties and do a little talking or singing. One of the things he did was Tillie with the Wand. I don't remember a word of it, but all I know, all you have to do is to mention it I'd start laughing, because he was so funny!

The Presbyterian Orphanage ended up by being Edgewood Home, which is still in existence.

Riess: Still an orphanage?

Roth: No, it's not an orphanage now. It takes care of troubled children, children that are problems at home, that can't live at home. They live at Edgewood in cottages. My mother was very interested in that,

Roth: and as a matter of fact, she donated one of the buildings there; she built it. It's still there. And there's a group of very fine young people that work on this board. But it's had to turn into something that fit the modern days. And there are no adoption agencies, you see, so it had to go out of existence.

Riess: Was it a racially mixed group?

Roth: Oh, yes.

Riess: So even though it was sponsored by the Presbyterian church, it was open to everyone.

Roth: Oh, yes, it had to be. Then an awful lot of private money had to go into keeping it supported. And it is now off of Nineteenth Avenue, and beautiful buildings, and very well run. My mother was president for years. I was too.

Riess: When you say an awful lot of private money had to go into it, do you feel that it's something that should be the responsibility of the--

Roth: Well, I guess now we must have some state money, because I think it's helped quite a bit. I'm not on the board now, so I don't really know much about it.

Then after the war began, of course, I was Red Cross volunteer chairman.

Riess: Did anybody in particular introduce you to that, or bring you into that group?

Roth: No, I was on the board.

Riess: Well, to be on the board, you must have been appointed by someone. I'm just wondering how you got started.

Roth: Mrs. Diehl, Frances Diehl, the head of the Red Cross, she apparently had great confidence in me and, before Pearl Harbor, I worked on a committee that helped supply things for boys overseas. I mean, small things. For instance, from the Navy, if they had to have a special medicine or special watch or something. Mrs. Selah Chamberlain and I worked together and they called it Camp and Hospital--I was head of that. Then when Pearl Harbor happened, they asked me to be volunteer chairman and I think I was chairman for four years. I went to work every day at eight--eight till five, sometimes six.

Riess: So you drove up every day to the city to do that?

Roth: Sometimes, or we were in town off and on. Down here weekends, you know.

Riess: This was the San Francisco chapter?

Roth: San Francisco chapter. But it was pretty big because, you see, we were the harbor that everything came through. All those poor people that came back, came back through here, people who came back from the prisons in the Philippines, the little nuns from the Catholic missions that the Filipinos made walk up the road on their knees. I remember them at the pier, you know, picking out clothes. They had nothing but just their dresses. No underwear, nothing underneath at all, just nothing. They were so sweet, picking out their underwear, because [laughs] the things that looked nice, looked so nice to them. You could see the happiness in their faces, just when they could see something nice and clean to wear. It was pathetic, just awful, really awful.

Riess: Tell me more.

Roth: Well, it was regular Red Cross work.

Riess: I think of Red Cross as rolling bandages, mostly.

Roth: Oh, we rolled bandages, all the bandages, of course, but you have your production department and you have your motor corps. You see, you had motor corps then, and we probably had four ambulances in use. Then you had your supplies to send out, and all the other chapters would be working under the San Francisco chapter.

Riess: The East Bay, and Richmond.

Roth: Yes, because you see, we had the docks where the ships came, where the boys landed.

Riess: The individual soldiers were able to request things of the Red Cross?

Roth: They did through this committee called Camp and Hospital, not through the main channels of the Red Cross. Camp and Hospital was a part of Red Cross, but it was a part that was put into operation just during the war to take care of--for instance, a boy might have to sell his watch. He needed the money and wouldn't want to take it overseas. Little things like that.

And once a week I took a show out to some place, Navy or Army camps, and some of the places that were more or less hidden, secret places.

There was a group in San Francisco called the cookie ladies. And the Army and Navy just loved the cookies, but the cookie ladies were not terribly well disciplined. [laughs] The Army said, "They've got to come through Red Cross. If they come through Red Cross, it will be fine."

Riess: Well, what did they do that was a problem?

Roth: You know, they'd come to the camps with earrings and pearls, and do different things that you don't do in the Army. The Army's rather strict. So they came through me. I was head of that committee, which had nothing to do with my being chairman, too, but every Wednesday night I'd call NBC and I had a friend there, Bill Baldwin, and I'd say, "Bill, what's going on tonight?" He'd say, "Well, we'll look and see," and he'd look around and see what talent and shoo them all out.

Riess: Yes, because you said you had a group going out and I wondered who was in charge of it.

Roth: Bill Baldwin, and he's with somebody famous now. I haven't seen him since--he was excellent.

Riess: When you say some secret places, what does this mean?

Roth: Places that nobody knew about. We had a few of those.

Riess: And what kind of soldiers or people would be kept in these secret places?

Roth: They were protecting the city. Hilo Hattie did her whole performance on the ping pong table one night in one of those secret places.

Riess: Hilo Hattie?

Roth: Hilo Hattie, yes, I took her out. You haven't heard of Hilo Hattie? She's famous in Hawaii. She died just last month, but she was wonderful.

Riess: Was she like Bloody Mary?

Roth: She was a dancer. At Filoli, she used to do the Hilo Hattie Hop.

Riess: In your eight-to-five Red Cross day, would you meet in the morning with the heads of all of your divisions?

Roth: We had meetings all day long. I had a charming vice-president, Mrs. Madison, who made all my speeches for me; so I never had to make a speech.

Riess: Is that because you don't like to make speeches?

Roth: I can't.

Riess: You don't have time.

Roth: No, I can't. So Mrs. Marshall Madison, she makes beautiful speeches.

Riess: To what kinds of groups is this?

Roth: Oh, we had large groups.

Riess: To raise money?

Roth: Raise money, and explain what the Red Cross was doing and-- Oh, I didn't mind running the meetings. That doesn't bother me. But speeches I don't like.

Riess: Now the Red Cross gets a lot of support from the Community Chest, but it was separate in those days, wasn't it?

Roth: Then it was not in the Chest. Door to door, that was the way. You'd write to people that can donate a little more, and then a door to door.

During the war, there was no problem in raising money. People were willing to give.

Riess: This was one of the ways that the civilians really could contribute.

Roth: Yes. Because you have to buy material for bandages, and you have to buy gasoline to run the ambulances. You see we met all these ships that came in, and they might have two hundred wounded on board.

Riess: Then were there places already waiting for them in the various hospitals?

Roth: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

Riess: That was all arranged.

Roth: That's what we would do, you see.

Riess: You would make those arrangements.

Roth: Arrangements through the Army or the Navy, so everything would be planned when they came in.

Riess: Was there a person that you were constantly in contact with?

Roth: They had what the Army called a field director, and he was in charge of anything that would come up locally.

Riess: He was the liaison.

Roth: Yes. We happened to have a very good man that I could work with nicely.

Riess: When you came in after Pearl Harbor, how much building up of the organization needed to be done?

Roth: Oh, a lot, because we were then just a very small organization, and then, you see, San Francisco becoming the big port, we then bought a building because we grew so.

Riess: So you had to have a whole building just to run your operation.

Roth: Oh, yes, we had people on three, four floors.

Riess: Where was your building?

Roth: Van Ness, between California and Sacramento. It's there still, but we sold it a little while ago.

Riess: Had the Red Cross been this geared up during World War I?

Roth: [pause] I was too young, I wasn't interested then.

Riess: I wondered if there had been any precedent.

Roth: It was different, World War I, the war wasn't here.

Riess: That's true. It was not on our edges.

Roth: We were so near Pearl Harbor. And the Philippines, you see. We had all the wounded coming back here. They all came through San Francisco.

Riess: And did you also have to have a department that would have involved interpreters?

Roth: Oh, yes, and then the family service, where they got in touch with the family, which was regular Red Cross work.

Riess: When that ended, that must have left a big hole in a lot of people's lives.

Roth: I was glad to take a rest, because I worked every day, all day. I was always at the office by a quarter past eight and I never left till five.

Riess: And feeling under pressure?

Roth: Yes, there was plenty of work for me to do. I could work all day. I think it just sort of grew, just grew.

Roth: And then, of course, Red Cross is a volunteer thing, and you have to learn to get along with people. There were some people that Elena Madison, vice-president, could get along with better than I did, and we'd kind of divide up that way. So everyone was happy.

Riess: Would you recruit people through other organizations, like churches?

Roth: Yes, churches, and through the Army and Navy clubs too, you'd be able to get people.

Riess: Also during that war there was USO, United Service Organization, dancing with the soldiers. Did that exist out here also?

Roth: Yes, oh yes.

Riess: But the Red Cross wouldn't do that kind of thing?

Roth: No, just this one show I took out, which had nothing to do with my position as volunteer chairman. It was this Camp and Hospital thing I'd been in first. And it was really the Navy that got us into that, because the Navy said, "We cannot afford to lose these people, but we cannot have them come in unaccompanied."

Riess: The cookie ladies.

Roth: Yes. And they served cakes such as you've never tasted after our show. We'd have a singer. We'd get a couple of singers, whoever was at a theater in town. Bill Baldwin had quite a bit of pull and he was awfully good himself; he was a good MC. He was MC, I think, for one of our big movie people.

Riess: Did you have Bob Hope up here?

Roth: No, I didn't have Bob Hope, I never took Bob Hope.

Riess: Bing Crosby?

Roth: Bing, I'm not sure that Bing lived here then.

Riess: Did the cookie ladies fall in line nicely or were they among the volunteers that were difficult?

Roth: They were wonderful, absolutely wonderful. And the head of the cookie ladies was Mrs. Ets-Hokin.

Riess: You must have some wisdom to share about working with volunteers.

Roth: That's easy. Just get along with them.

Riess: Yes. Isn't it sort of a matter of meeting their need to feel--

Roth: [pauses] Well--you just have to let them feel that they're accomplishing something. I think that's really the trick.

They were wonderful working people, dedicated to their work. They really worked. I couldn't say enough for the people that worked here at the Red Cross.

And if you've ever been to a pier, and seen our boys come in... it would be easy to get volunteers. You'd just see the work that had to be done.

Riess: Some of these women had husbands overseas?

Roth: Oh, yes, a lot of them did.

Riess: Did emotion run high all the time because of that?

Roth: Always. And, of course, between volunteers there's always quite a bit of jealousy--little feuds. It all blew over, because there was so much work to do they just didn't have time for it.

Riess: You wouldn't have heard about all of this anyway.

Roth: Oh, yes, I'd hear about it. But I think they were all too busy. They did a wonderful job. I'm still on the board as an honorary member, so I read the minutes, and once in a while go to the meetings.

Riess: Is it harder to get people interested in it?

Roth: Yes, now it's difficult. When there isn't a war, they don't want to work. And the work isn't as interesting, let's face it.

Riess: Floods and disaster aren't interesting?

Roth: Oh, yes, but then you are a professional mostly.

The Red Cross will be a hundred years next year. I am on the centennial committee. They are celebrating it all over the world.

Riess: Has it always been a women's organization, would you say?

Roth: No. I wouldn't think it's a women's--our board of directors are mostly men. There are a great many men. You take disaster relief. They're mostly men.

Riess: But they are staff, aren't they?

Roth: No. You have a volunteer chairman and you have a volunteer committee. It's very hard to get a volunteer to chair a good committee when there's nothing coming up. Now there might be a flood coming up, but at the time, say, there's no flood, no nothing, and you can't get people. They don't want to work then. There's nothing glamorous about it, you see.

Riess: And that's a hard time to try to gather funds, because people don't want to give for the future. They want to give for the crisis, I guess.

Roth: Yes, that's it. For the war, it's easy. Funds rolled in. We could always get what we needed. Think of the clothes they sent down to the piers for these people who came in with nothing, just nothing.

Riess: Were the clothes mostly gathered from individuals, or did you get them from stores?

Roth: No, you had to get them from stores. You had to be pretty careful what you picked up, you know. You just didn't have discarded things. And the stores gave, and individuals gave coats. Because all those that came from the prisons in Manila, they had nothing. Just what was on the outside, that's all.

Riess: Then did they stay on?

Roth: They were sent different places. I'd say every one was a case that you had to follow through with. In other words, you had to know that they reached their destination, that there was a mother or a sister or someone to take care of them. That's not volunteer work, you see. We had paid social workers. They were naturally more effective doing that work. Volunteers would do the work up to where the social worker would take over.

Riess: It sounds like a very important time in your life.

Roth: It was, for me. It was very satisfying. I worked very hard, but I loved every day of my work. I really loved it, really loved it.

War and Postwar: Stables, Servants

Riess: You had to let the horses go out to pasture for a few years.

Roth: Oh, everybody turned everything out. The big horses, the big Hackneys, never came back, because they used them in work, and they never came back as the show horse. Only one show in the East now has a few.

Riess: The horses were requisitioned, is that what you're saying?

Roth: Yes. They used them up. The Hackneys. You see, there's a Hackney pony and a Hackney horse. And the Hackneys are a strong horse, quite strong. And I've never had a big Hackney horse since the war.

Riess: They were sent overseas?

Roth: No, they used them in the Army, working. And they died off. Nobody's had any since, you see, because the original Hackney horse was imported from England. Well, England naturally lost all theirs, so there was nothing to import. That's why I have that big collection of rigs at Filoli. Can't use them any more. I have no big horses.

Riess: Do you remember somebody coming and saying, "We need your horses?"

Roth: No. I just sold them. By the time the war was over, they would be too old to be any good anyway.

Riess: How about your saddle horses, though?

Roth: Saddle horses were different. They were taken. They used those, too, but that's an American horse. It's bred here.

Riess: I mean during that period of time when you weren't really using your horses, what happened?

Roth: No, nobody had any. Everybody, well, you couldn't have a stable because the boys in the stable would be in the Army. So there was no stable.

Riess: So in 1945 you then bought a new stable and started all over again?

Roth: Started again. I had nothing left over.

Riess: But when you bought a new stable, where could you go then to find--

Roth: Oh, I saw people in the Midwest.

Riess: Does that mean that some very good lines died out?

Roth: Yes, not with saddle horses, because we had plenty, but with the Hackney horse, you see.

Riess: But good breeding lines. Would they put a really fine stallion in the Army? They didn't care how many ribbons were hanging from him?

Roth: No, it didn't matter.

Riess: What happened at Filoli during the war? Were your gardeners American-born?

Roth: No, most of my gardeners were Italian, and they were all mostly older men. So we just cut down on the gardens and went ahead. Because I didn't have a gardener that would have been worth a nickel in the Army. They were all older men.

Riess: Well, he could have gardened the general's patch outside the window, but--[laughter]

Roth: Maybe yes, but in the meantime, he could keep up mine better.

Riess: You hadn't had Japanese gardeners that were then relocated?

Roth: My mother had a Japanese servant and I inherited Taka. Then I had to send him to camp, which was a sad thing. I had to leave him with his suitcase down on Van Ness Avenue to be picked up to go to camp. He'd been in the house for twenty years with us, you know. However, I felt happier having him away. You see we were in the shipping business and he waited on the table. I think it was better that he went away. Then we were clear because something could be said and--

Riess: It really would be a test of his strength of character.

Roth: That's it. And he was easy-going; people influenced him. Finally I said, "Taka, you cannot go to Japantown. You can stay with me as long as they let you, but you mustn't--if you want to take a walk, you can walk out on the street, but you cannot go to Japantown."

Riess: He could be bribed?

Roth: He could be. Maybe he couldn't be, but in the steamship business, I couldn't take the chance.

Riess: Did he come back to you afterwards, after the war?

Roth: Oh, yes, he came back. I had a Chinese cook and that [laughing] was something!

Riess: Why?

Roth: Well, the Chinese and the Japanese didn't get along very well, so Taka used to read the paper to Kee, because he couldn't read the paper. When there was a blackout, I was always scared for fear that one would be dead at the end of the blackout. [laughs]

Riess: Those old enmities.

Roth: Oh yes, yes. They didn't like each other, at all. They hated each other.

Riess: What was Matson Shipping doing during the war?

Roth: Oh, they were all taken by the Navy. We didn't have any. Oh, I guess we probably had a few freighters.

Riess: What did your husband do?

Roth: Actually [chuckles] I don't know what he did--went to the office.

Other Shipping Families

Riess: I had asked you once if you had ever met Onassis, and you said he was one of many people you had entertained.

Roth: Yes. I enjoyed him very much. He was a great friend, a very dear friend of ours. And this was before he was married to his first wife.

Riess: He was young.

Roth: And very prosperous, and this friend of ours brought him down for the weekend, and we really had a happy time. I enjoyed him. As a matter of fact, he then invited us to his first wedding, and we went. She was beautiful. A beautiful bride.

Riess: You flew to Athens?

Roth: No, no, that was in New York.

Riess: He was one of those people, I understand, that just gave off such a sense of power.

Roth: He overdid the drinking, which was his downfall. Which was too bad. It really was too bad.

Riess: Were there signs of that in the beginning, when he was a young man?

Roth: No, in the beginning it wasn't that way. He was gay and full of life. It wasn't that way. But then he became really too much, too much.

Riess: Did he do any business with Matson particularly, any tie-ins there?

Roth: I don't think so.

Riess: How about some of the other big shipping families?

Roth: Well, one of our other friends was Mr. Eugenides.

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Roth: Eugenides owned most of the big ships sailing out of Athens. A very prominent Greek in the shipping business, and a friend I guess of these other important ones, Niarchos, only older, you see. Eugenides died before Niarchos became quite so famous. I still get a Christmas card from his sister. She must be awfully old. He loaned us a yacht one year, which we enjoyed.

Riess: In the Mediterranean?

Roth: Yes. He died quite a number of years ago, but he was to what the other important ones are now.

Riess: Yes, the equivalent.

Roth: And he knew Onassis, too. I met Onassis at his house. Of course, he was older then. He lived at home in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Riess: A lot of them choose Switzerland.

Roth: They keep their money there.

Riess: Before the war, had you known the big Japanese shipping outfits?

Roth: I didn't, I really didn't. Swedish, yes. Because, my father having been consul general, we had met all the Swedes.

Riess: Then is it Ralph Davies who was president of American President Line--the other big West Coast shipper?

Roth: Yes, but that's later.

Riess: I'm trying to get a picture of the whole shipping scene.

Roth: Stanley Dollar.

Riess: Yes. Tell me about him.

Roth: I couldn't tell you about that. I don't really know. I knew the daughter, and I knew him.

Other Volunteer Activities

Riess: I was asking you about your early areas of interest and time and energy. For instance, the League of Women Voters, was that something?

Roth: No. Definitely No.

Riess: How about your husband's interests, other than work?

Roth: I don't think he had any. I think he never had time. I don't think he had time for anything.

Riess: For symphony boards and things like that?

Roth: No. Opera board, I've been on for years. Symphony, no.

Riess: Ballet?

Roth: No.

Riess: You were a trustee of the de Young?

Roth: Yes, that I've been for years. It's not de Young now, it's the Fine Arts Museums.

Riess: Was your heart really in that?

Roth: The art part I like. Yes. It's been a very interesting work out at the de Young, because after all we started from a pretty little museum.

Riess: And in your time on that board, what major things were you involved in?

Roth: I have been on various committees, all interesting.

Riess: Do you remember the negotiations for the great collections like the Brundage?

Roth: Oh, Brundage, we really worked on.

Riess: Were you among those people who courted Mr. Brundage?

Roth: Oh, yes. Everybody did. [laughter] Everybody did. I had somebody else I had to court too. I've forgotten who it was now. But we had to do a lot of courting.

Riess: I'd like to hear about courting Mr. Brundage.

Roth: We all just entertained a bit, to convince him, show him and convince him and line him up. [chuckles] He was so evasive. He really was naughty because he was very evasive.

Riess: Playing with this city.

Roth: Yes. Playing back and forth. And we just spent so much time on it, a couple of years to be working so hard.

Riess: Where did he have his collection?

Roth: Various places. Stored, I think, mostly. Some in his home in Santa Barbara. Then I think stored in warehouses.

Riess: Who was the director of the de Young at the time that you were on it?

Roth: Dr. Heil.

Riess: Did he work well with the board? How were his relations with the board?

Roth: I wouldn't say a hundred percent. It was difficult. He was difficult.

Riess: He was difficult, or the board was.

Roth: He was difficult.

Riess: Once again, it's volunteers.

Roth: That's it. [aside to whimpering puppy] Oh, stop!

No, he was difficult. Ian White's been great because Ian can work with people. I think the head of a museum has got to be someone that can work with different personalities.

Don't forget, our boards are better now than they were. They're more carefully selected. I think they select people with a better knowledge of what they're going to do.

Riess: So you had the experience of working on a board with both Heil and Ian White?

Roth: Oh yes, I've been on the board forever.

Riess: Is that a reappointment every four years, or how does that work?

Roth: Yes, I think you get to be an honorary board member and then you're that for a few years, and then you're a board member again. But now I am off.

Riess: Caroline Charles said you set up the auxiliary at San Francisco General with Mrs. Nion Tucker.*

Roth: Oh, yes, maybe I did. But that's so worthwhile, those poor people.

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*See interview with Caroline Moore Charles, The Action and Passion of Our Times, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1979.

Riess: Well, San Francisco General is the downtrodden--

Roth: Oh, it's terrible, it's unbelievable.

Riess: Was that hard to get volunteers to work on?

Roth: I got most of them from the office, from our office. I don't know whether they have it anymore. I set it up, anyway. Just so little money--if you send them a hundred dollars, it's like a million. Those poor people--my daughter Lurline worked there quite a bit, and it's really sad.

Riess: Once again, it's a case where--

Roth: It should be done by the city! But it isn't.

Riess: If you could convince two or three of the volunteers at Mount Zion, or something, that their time would be better spent there--

Roth: It would be. Because these poor people, they have nothing, and they get nothing.

Riess: Is there any sense of coordination of all of the hospital boards or volunteers across the city?

Roth: I don't think so. I don't do anything about it now. I just send a check.

Riess: [laughs] When you were getting it started--

Roth: Oh no, no. We had to work on it a bit. It isn't pleasant work. No, I think the hospital's better now since they've had the new addition. Now I believe everything is fine. I think everything's fine because they had this most wonderful woman who headed it there. She's dead now, and I can't think of her name, so I shouldn't mention it without knowing her name because she was absolutely marvelous. She got along with the staff and got along with patients and volunteers. She really put it over.

Riess: It's interesting. I suppose you had seen things that bad during your Red Cross days, so you were not naive about human misery maybe.

Roth: Oh, this was misery. And it's misery today, I bet, too.

Riess: There was a Lurline Roth Foundation for a while.

Roth: Yes, there was, and I think that you would have to ask the office about. That we had to give up when we gave Filoli to the National Trust. We took the money in the foundation and donated it to Filoli. I think that's what happened.

Riess: In the oral history interview done with your son, Bill, he muses about why some families really have a strongly developed sense of giving.* Could you speculate on what makes some people have that strong sense of philanthropy?

Roth: I think you're born that way. I really think you're born that way. The feeling of wanting to give, and enjoying it. Then some people give and don't enjoy it. They give because they have to. But they're not happy in doing it. And I think some people just like to give.

Riess: That probably also would define the difference between the volunteer you could work with and the one you couldn't.

Roth: Yes, that's it. I think some people just enjoy giving. And it gives them pleasure. It certainly gives me. If I had more to give, it would be wonderful.

Riess: Your son certainly seems to be one of those people.

Roth: Oh, he gives much too much. He gives more than he can afford. He does. But he loves it. But he's fussy who he gives to; it has to be something he likes.

Riess: He is pretty remarkable.

Roth: The best son in the world!

Riess: Tell me about him when he was young, and how he shaped up.

Roth: Well, he just was easy to bring up. And possibly I was easy too.

Riess: He was your first child.

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*See interview with William Matson Roth, Bay Area Foundation History, Vol. IV, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1976.

Roth: Yes. Almost born at the baseball game! [laughter]

Riess: Really?

Roth: Yes. I was at the baseball game and I got a rain check, hoping to return. I said to Bill, "Let's just get a rain check because maybe I'll get home and he won't arrive, and so we'll come back and see the end of the game."

Riess: You were very calm about the whole thing.

Roth: Yes. I got home and the doctor [laughing] didn't get there before the baby! He arrived before the doctor did.

Riess: Your mother was there and helped you?

Roth: No, no. I had the doctor who gave the anesthetic at Adler's Sanitarium. What was her name? She was quite famous. I got her. She arrived, but the doctor arrived just as Bill was being born.

Riess: Well, you sound extremely modern. I thought in those days people spent a lot of time lying around waiting for it to happen.

Roth: Oh heavens, no. [interviewer chuckles] No, heavens no. I rode horseback.

Riess: Right up to when?

Roth: Not till the last. The doctor said, "Do it as long as you're comfortable." Well, you're not comfortable too long.

Bill was an easy child to bring up, very easy.

Riess: Did he go to San Francisco public schools?

Roth: He went to San Francisco schools and then went to Cate's--too young, a year too young. I was very sad about it, but it was when my mother was dying of cancer and I really wasn't able to give him the time that I felt I should. If he came home with a black eye, after a fight or playing baseball, I was upset because I was nervous. I just felt that I was too picky, and it was better for him to be away. So I sent him to Cate's. He felt he was sent a year too young.

Riess: When was that?

Roth: I think he was only thirteen, maybe.

Riess: Did he go with friends from around here?

Roth: No, he didn't. He was happy at Cate's. After I sent him, I went down every other weekend and took him out on Sunday, because he could have Sunday off, for that first year.

I think Bill felt it was a little early.

Riess: This is something he would say now?

Roth: Yes, he'd say don't do it.

Riess: He must really remember it as being tough.

Roth: That was it.

You see, the twins were young enough that you didn't have to devote as much time to them. They had a nurse and they were little. But when a boy gets over ten, you know, they need attention.

Riess: And your husband, how much time would your husband have to give?

Roth: Well, he was so busy working. He was always so busy.

Riess: Did he go to Cate's through the high school years, then?

Roth: Yes, and graduated from there and then went to Yale. Then after Yale, I think he went to Princeton.

Riess: He was working with the Colt Press around 1938. How did he got into that crowd?

Roth: Well, of course he knew the Grabhorns, Jane Grabhorn. But he was always friends with the literary group.

Mr. Cate was devoted to Bill. He was his favorite pupil in the school. Oh, he loved Bill Roth.

Riess: Did he do athletics?

Roth: He rode at school. The rest of the boys rode. I don't think he was much into baseball after he was almost born there. He doesn't seem to like it anymore. [laughter]

Riess: What interests did start showing up early, at Cate's, do you remember?

Roth: Athletics, I would think, and walking. He loves the country, he loves walking, he loves nature.

Riess: His academic interests? Languages? Math?

Roth: I would think not math.

Riess: He seems always to have been interested in historical things, in preservation.

Roth: He gave a beautiful collection of Yeats to Yale. I think it's a superb collection.

Riess: Who was his guide in collecting, do you know?

Roth: I have no idea.

Riess: It sounds like he was very independent of you.

Roth: Yes, he was, he was. He was away from home so much. As a little boy, he went to Europe with my mother, when he was maybe twelve years old. She took him for two months to Europe and he traveled with her. And really had a happy time. Not with another boy or anything, but just him and his grandmother.

You know, you asked about my mother the other day and I went to this Francisca Club luncheon, where I sat at the table with those that had been on the board fifty years ago. (That's a long time ago.)

Riess: That is a long time ago, yes.

Roth: And I was amazed at the girl that sat next to me. She said, "Lurline, you don't realize what a very capable woman your mother was." You know, I'd never heard anybody say it before. And here at this luncheon, my fifty-year-old friend said, "I just have to tell you how capable she was." And I'd forgotten, actually, that she was.

Riess: People keep focusing so much on your father.

Roth: That's it. I'd forgotten.

Riess: Your son's politics are different from yours.

Roth: Oh, yes. He's a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat.

Riess: When was that clear?

Roth: Always. Always. Always.

Riess: Was that a rebellious position in the beginning, do you think?

Roth: I have no idea, but we never discussed it. Politics were never discussed at home.

Riess: Is that because your husband would have boiled over?

Roth: No. He would have laughed, but I probably would have gotten into a battle.

Riess: You would have.

Roth: Yes, I would have, but Bill (Sr.) wouldn't have. Oh, no, Bill would have been a gentleman. But not his mother. So, we never discussed politics.

Riess: Couldn't Bill (Jr.) change your mind? I should think--

Roth: No, he couldn't change my mind, because I make my own mind up. If I want to change it I'll change it. I voted for a Democrat, when I voted for Roosevelt. I can vote for anybody I want, but it's going to be my mind, not his.

Oh, I had to be a Democrat when Bill ran for governor. I couldn't vote and not be a Democrat, so I was a Democrat and then I got un-Democrated later. [laughter]

VI FILOLI'S GARDENS

[Interview 6: May 4, 1981]##

The Gardeners

Riess: We have talked about Filoli in many ways, but today we are going to talk about the celebrated gardens. Mrs. Roth, when you moved into Filoli did you have Bruce Porter's plans?

Roth: Mr. Porter's plans I never did see. I think that now they have them. Since he died, I think we have them at Filoli.

Riess: But it was a celebrated garden then?

Roth: Yes, it was, but pretty much in its beginning. The trees were very little.

Riess: When he was putting in plants did he buy as mature a specimen as possible?

Roth: No, I think he bought small things. I think so.

Miss Worn worked under Bruce Porter. At some period they had a disagreement, on what I have no idea. Bruce Porter left Filoli and did not go down again. Miss Worn stayed.

Well, Miss Worn was the one that ran the planting. And they had Italian gardeners, about twelve I'd think counting maintenance men, and they all worked under one Italian gardener, who worked himself. He was the head man, but he worked just the same as the rest.

They had a very good system. When they did their summer planting where you put in all of your little plants, everybody helped that gardener that had that garden. All of the men got together and they helped. So they would do all of this planting in no time. A marvelous system. You couldn't possibly work it now, I'm sure. Where would you get twelve people to work together? [laughs]

Roth: These were all Italians, hardly spoke English, and they had a fascinating place to live there. They had this big cottage, brick also. It burned down finally. They had their own cook, and they had their own meals and they had a bocce ball field over there and they had a great time. Those were great Italians. One still lives there. We call him Romeo!

Riess: Were they from the same small town?

Roth: All from the same town, all from northern Italy, the whole crowd.

Riess: Do you know where?

Roth: Yes, oh yes, I've seen their families' places in Italy when I go to Montecatini. They are from Lucca, near Florence, on the way to Pisa.

Riess: Was the first one or two of them brought by Mr. Bourn or did they come to this country in search of jobs?

Roth: Oh, I think they were all friends of each others.

Riess: At that time, on any estate on the peninsula, there would have been Italian gardeners?

Roth: Yes, I think so. Yes, there were so many Italians here, and they were such good gardeners. But none of that crowd I had had ever been to school to study horticulture or anything. They just had grown up on the soil.

Riess: But it interests me that none of them were able to really take it over. So you are saying they were very good, but they had no imagination?

Roth: No, you would have had to have the garden complete. The garden was complete because what I had done is only carry it further from what Bruce Porter planned and then enlarge upon it.

Riess: Your head gardener, Louis Moriconi, was born in 1918 according to my notes, and he was still at Filoli in 1968.

Roth: Oh, yes, he was the first head gardener. Then he took over the greenhouse. What he did was give each gardener a part of the garden that was his to work in and he just got up every morning and worked in his own place. And, as I say, when they planted, they all helped each other.

Riess: Had the gardeners brought families with them?

Roth: No, I think we had no families.

Miss Isabella Worn

Roth: When we bought the place, Miss Worn was not running it. Miss Josselyn was running it. [spells name] She was a great friend of the Bourns, so when they were taken sick I suppose was when Miss Worn left and then Miss Josselyn took over, because she more or less ran the house when they were sick.

I inherited the butler, Johnson, from the Bourns. I inherited two from them, also David. Johnson died, but David still comes.

Riess: You got Miss Worn back.

Roth: I got Miss Worn back and she was one of the greatest women, the greatest. Why somebody hasn't written a book about Miss Worn, I don't know, because she was great. She always made you feel that the garden was absolutely yours. She made me feel as if I had made the garden. Well, I didn't make the garden, of course. But she always gave you that feeling and gave you it when she suggested planting something. She was always sure that you liked the plant. She didn't plant it just because it was the proper thing to go in that place. She would be sure you liked it first. So it gave you a wonderful feeling of possession.

Riess: Did you ever disagree with her?

Roth: Never! Oh, I was so happy with her, just happy to see her everytime she came driving in her old truck with her old gardener. She brought her gardener with her up to the week before she died.

Riess: What would her gardener do for her?

Roth: [He] would help her do things because she was getting on and couldn't always do everything. So he carried and helped.

Miss Worn, besides being able to work with the gardener, was one of our great decorators doing flowers and tables.

Riess: When you wanted to get in touch with her again in 1936 or so, when you hired her back, was she working on the peninsula a lot?

Roth: Oh, no, she wasn't. She was more or less half retired. She didn't want any more work. I persuaded her, which wasn't very hard to do because she adored the garden because she had planted it. So she was just happy to be back with it.

Riess: What was the way you worked with Miss Worn? Did she arrive on a particular day of the week?

Roth: Yes, she would arrive in the old truck every say Thursday and I would meet with her and we'd go through the garden bit by bit, every bit of the garden we would go through, and discuss the planting.

Riess: Did she bring plant materials with her?

Roth: Yes, she would bring specimen things with her. And she always was looking for the new things that were coming in. We tried a lot of new things sometimes they didn't work.

She lived across the Bay, came in an old hat, [had] the sweetest, dearest face. Everybody loved Miss Worn. But she in some ways was hard to get along with because she was very opinionated and wanted to do things her way. But as her way was always perfect, I didn't find anything to argue about and so we were great friends.

Riess: How well educated was she as a horticulturist?

Roth: Oh, I think she had had training. I really don't know. I never knew her until I bought Filoli and I had had her in the house to do decorations. She worked--I mean if you wanted flowers done or your table for a luncheon or dinner, you called her and she came and did it.

Riess: She would use your garden flowers?

Roth: Oh, yes, always if they could be used and then she would augment it. You never have enough.

Riess: Did she discuss with you what you would have or did she more or less have her ideas and--

Roth: Oh, she had her ideas. But she would ask you what you'd think.

Everybody always talks about why we didn't get pictures of the things she did and have a book done. Why we didn't--because there has never been anybody quite like her.

Riess: I have pictures of the wedding that she designed for the Robert Gordon Sprouls' daughter when she got married at the President's House, and the staircase is draped with della Robbia wreaths made with real fruit.

Roth: Oh, yes, they would be beautiful. Everything she did was beautiful.

She was always late. The guests were practically at the front door and you were cleaning up the mess! [laughter] Always late!

She had lovely containers herself, some lovely things. I suppose they had been given her. I have some of her things.

Riess: Did her sister come with her?

Roth: Once in a while. I did not know her sister very well.

Riess: They were both in this.

Roth: Yes, by the end of the thirties her sister was getting on and I don't think she went out too much.

Riess: When Miss Worn came to decorate for a party, was she still in her truck with her old hat or did she get herself up to look like a guest?

Roth: Oh, no, the old hat. She had the funniest hat. There's one picture I have, I think, of Miss Worn, isn't there, and my gardener together?

Riess: Yes, that picture I have seen.

Roth: With the old hat on.

Riess: In fact, there are no pictures of these events?

Roth: No, there aren't any pictures. I never took any. Why? Why she didn't take them. . .

Riess: Could you describe--

Roth: No, I couldn't. I really couldn't. I don't know. She always made the flowers fit the room and the occasion. So it was like when you went in the room, it just fitted.

Riess: So when you think back on it--

Roth: You don't realize that it was as good as it was. And she helped me at Filoli a great deal in doing my flowers because at Filoli I did my flowers once a week, every Friday, the complete house, and that took me half past eight in the morning until half past twelve anyway, and I picked the flowers the day before or I couldn't get it done because in the living room I think I had six bouquets--in the living room alone. Then in the library I always had five, and in the French room two, and then in the back study where we sat maybe five or six. Then in the hallways there were always three in the halls, and that takes a lot of time.

But I did have help. I had someone helping me.

Riess: In the gathering?

Roth: Yes.

Riess: In the arranging also?

Roth: No, I generally picked the flowers. Well, the gardeners helped. Some picked flowers. But also in fixing them, you have to have somebody help. I generally had a houseboy or somebody help.

Riess: Did you have fragrance in these arrangements?

Roth: Oh, I think that is always important if there is any in the garden. There isn't always.

Riess: Was Miss Worn working for anyone else in this neighborhood when you had her?

Roth: No garden work, but she still did table decorations for parties, but not for many people. Especially she did [them] for Mrs. Clark who had a beautiful home in San Mateo.

Riess: What is her whole name, Mrs. Clark?

Roth: [pauses to recall] Mrs. Clark was a Tobin; Celia Clark was her name. She has a perfectly beautiful home, but I think she left it to San Mateo. Is it a library now?

Riess: I don't know.

I am interested in what your financial arrangements were with Miss Worn. Did she work by the hour?

Roth: By the month.

Riess: Was she a good business woman?

Roth: [laughs] I would say she wasn't at all! She just--when I think what I paid her and nowadays--really! No, money really didn't--she wasn't cheap. I mean if she did a job, she would charge for it, but then again, she wouldn't--it would be spotty, just depending on how she felt, I guess.

Riess: Did she say anything, in your conversations with her, about Bruce Porter, what the problem was between the two of them?

Roth: No, no, it was a very funny thing. I never heard what it was about. It was about planting. Then he came down to see Filoli before he died and was so happy. He wouldn't come down while I lived there. He never came down, only after I left and he was so ill.

Riess: Who got him to come down?

Roth: I think Mrs. Arbegast, Mai, I think she did.

Riess: How did he like the place?

Roth: He loved it, he loved it, and he only made one recommendation, one thing that he didn't like. I can't remember what it was now. But he loved it. I think he had left us a lot of his manuscripts. I think the daughter has put that over. What is his daughter's name? I don't know.

It was something wonderful that he did, and you would have thought he would be dying to see it completed.

Riess: Of course, because a garden is like a baby that you give up for adoption.

Roth: That's it!

Riess: All of these strong-minded people! How come all of these strong people?

Roth: I guess that's why they get things done.

Riess: Did Miss Worn have any particular connections to the University of California?

Roth: She was very close to the University and brought many things from there, like the dawn redwoods. She brought those from the University.

Riess: Did they go directly into the ground?

Roth: Yes, they went right in and they started growing immediately. They are tremendous. My two that came were the very first ones that came over.

Riess: Was there any question about whether Woodside was a good place to plant them?

Roth: I think they probably gave them to me to try them out. But we have redwoods on our property, so I think they thought it could be good. But I hadn't any idea they would be as big as they are. They are tremendous.

Riess: Were there any more direct contacts with the University?

Roth: Oh, there were many. Many of my things are from the University.

Riess: Would that be through Miss Worn?

Roth: All through Miss Worn.

Riess: Can you think of any names of--

Roth: No, I can't, I can't. And you have to realize that my attentions were not all directed to the garden, but when you have young children, you are involved in other things. You are not free. When the children are gone and married, then you are free to spend all of the time in the garden you want to, but you can't very well do that when you have a boy and two girls to bring up. So I depended a great deal on Miss Worn.

Riess: Who else wandered through in those early days? Did Thomas Church?

Roth: Yes, he did once in a while. Many, many. Of course, people from England--and I don't even remember their names--enjoyed the garden because I always had it open to anybody that wanted to come.

Toichi Domoto##

Roth: Most of the material in the garden that Miss Worn brought came from Toichi Domoto. What I mean is, the big things, the trees and the camellias and the azaleas, most of these things came from Toichi Domoto who has been for years one of our greatest horticulturists.

He is out of business now. He retired, so he's finished. But if I wanted to know anything, I would ring Toichi up. He would come over and he would meet with Miss Worn. And after she died, I used Toichi entirely for information, to help me. He is tops. He is known all over California.

Riess: Was he educated here?

Roth: I think here. I didn't know him when he was that age, but I am sure it must have been here.

His father was here because during the war he was one of the Japanese that had to be moved away, which was pathetic, because he was one of our best citizens.

Domoto is in the same category as Miss Worn. I talk to him often now. He is on a lot of these big boards. But he had to close his nursery. He said he just couldn't get help. He had a tremendous place right in Hayward and I guess the taxes must have been terrible because he was right in the city. He still has the place. Once in a while I call or go over to see if I can find some precious thing there. But his brothers died and now he is alone and getting on in years and he just couldn't do it.

Riess: Did he introduce you particularly to Oriental gardens materials?

Roth: Yes, well, when we moved in I wouldn't say the garden was really completely finished. It still needed picking up. We had azaleas but we didn't have enough azaleas, so you have to put in more. Then I built up the wild garden which they had started as a wild garden. It had maybe six camellias and there are probably over one hundred now. I would say that three-quarters of the camellias at Filoli came from Domoto's.

Riess: There has been so much hybridizing of camellias--

Roth: Well, every year they have all these new ones. I even have one named after me, a Lurline, pink.

Riess: Did you have enough room at Filoli to continue to put in the new specimens just year after year?

Roth: Yes, and then also we had a lot of trouble with the deer eating them. Of course, when I moved in and I planted the fields for grass for my horses, that made it really nice for the deer. [laughs] So the deer increased and it ended up that we had to put in a very ugly wire fence. The idea of Filoli was the lovely lawn and garden going into the beautiful fields. But we had to give up that idea because the deer moved right in.

Riess: Aren't there some hedge-like plantings that are--

Roth: Domoto had one azalea, I think it's called red ruby, and they didn't seem to like that, but they liked everything else.

Riess: How about oleander. Do they eat oleander?

Roth: Oleander doesn't grown very well at Filoli. It's a bit too cold. And they wouldn't fit in the garden as a hedge. There wouldn't be anything in winter.

Riess: How did you meet Domoto?

Roth: Oh, I always knew him because my mother always had a garden and I always knew him.

After Miss Worn left, I would like to have gotten Domoto. But he had his own place and he made a lot of money and was well off. He wasn't interested. He loves Filoli though.

Riess: As we have been talking, I have noticed that something in here smells wonderful.

Roth: Something here? It is the iris. I've had lovely iris. I wish I had-- I just got back in time for the end. I have had one week of them only and I love them so. What I do is order two or three very good ones every year.

Riess: Do they naturalize?

Roth: Yes, they naturalize but, of course, after three or four years they get a bit smaller, but these are pretty good ones. There is a new one over there.

Riess: Do you order from catalogues?

Roth: Catalogues. These came from Oregon. Sometimes from Europe, different places.

Riess: Did you read Katherine White's book, Onward and Upward in the Garden?

Roth: No, I haven't read that.

Riess: It is about garden catalogues.

Roth: Oh, they're marvelous and very useful for me. I get all of my horse names from catalogues! I go all the way through and I pick out--I have a whole bunch of names here that I picked out through the iris catalogue which were great. They have a great imagination for names.

Riess: Name one.

Roth: Well, I can't think of one right now, but I just clip them out because when you name horses you have to send in three and you don't expect to use two of them. So you always have to have those extra names to send in.

Leslie Thiringer

Riess: We haven't talked about Leslie Thiringer.

Roth: Now, Leslie is Hungarian. He was born in Hungary and went to college there and got out during the war and hasn't been able to go back again.

Riess: I have him down as the head gardener, 1952 to '72. So it was after World War II he came here.

Roth: That's it and that's after Louis died and I was lucky to get Leslie because he was very knowledgeable, having really studied.

Riess: When he came, he didn't speak any English?

Roth: No, he didn't. His son is in Washington now. His son has bought him a nice little house. Leslie is retired. His wife died. His son is very high in--I guess our space program. A fine boy, just a great boy, and he was a little tyke when he came.

Riess: How did Leslie work in?

Roth: Of course, he changed everything around.

Riess: A Hungarian among all of these Italians. How did that work?

Roth: It didn't work so well, but I had Leslie to depend on. The Italians weren't as happy. They weren't half as happy! [laughs]

He managed. He worked himself. When the gardeners would go home, the things he wanted to correct he would just go out and find the plot and work until seven himself and kind of do the things that he couldn't get them to do. Better than to argue about it, to go do it.

Riess: Was there any real mutiny?

Roth: No, they got along. Leslie was a jewel and a very well educated man. So he was smart enough to cope with things.

Fruits, Flowers, Vegetables, Picnics

Riess: Was there a fruit and vegetable garden?

Roth: They had a big orchard. When we bought the place, the trees were just little baby trees. I just don't think we have the climate where Filoli is for an orchard that is varied--apples, yes, and persimmons. As a matter of fact, they had two orchards because one orchard was an orchard they leased out. They sold the apples. I had forgotten about that.

Riess: The Bourns did?

Roth: The Bourns, yes. But it is on the south side and it's quite warm. But the orchard that is in the garden, forget it. I have just had no luck with it. So gradually the trees died one by one and I made it half into a picking garden and now I think all of the trees are out.

Riess: Were they dwarf or standard trees?

Roth: Beautiful dwarf trees. The dwarf apples in one part of the garden all came from France and those apples are still growing, some of them. A few I have had to replace but not many. They were imported from France for the World's Fair at Treasure Island for the French Building.

Roth: Mr. Bourn had just arrived then [sic] and he purchased them and made a whole allee of these dwarf apples with white iris underneath. It was very beautiful really in the spring. Of course, some of them have died--apples and pears.

We had a whole vegetable garden. I had a regular vegetable man who just did vegetables. They came in every morning. There is nobody better than Italian gardeners for vegetables--we have tomatoes and artichokes and lettuce and the vegetables here. My gardener here is Italian and he would be lonely if he didn't have vegetables, I'm sure.

Riess: At Filoli, whose job was it to pour over the seed catalogues?

Roth: I did, all of the seed catalogues. I did that. I still do it. Not for Filoli, thank goodness! But I had a regular book and I knew how many flats were needed for each bed each summer and winter. Pansies we would probably plant, four types of pansies, violas and for Filoli you do it in a big way, not a flat like I do here, so you have to write it all down.

Riess: You wouldn't have used pansies in your arrangements though, would you?

Roth: Oh, yes, pansies are nice, but not in a big arrangement. In my big arrangements I used things that would keep because you just--well, things never kept a week and sometimes I would have to do them twice a week, if you were having guests. But sometimes you could sort of fix them up a bit.

For my birthday, what do you suppose my husband gave me? A golf cart! Because the picking garden was so far from the house and, for instance, when you pick roses you should put them in water and I would carry buckets out to the rose garden and have to lug them back in. So he gave me a golf cart. I have it here now. I got it for a birthday fifteen years ago, I think, or sixteen.

I put my buckets in the cart, and I would fill them with water and then pick my flowers and go from the flower garden to the road and put the flowers in and then go in with the truck--with the golf cart--and get somebody to help me unload it.

Riess: Are there any pictures of you in your golf cart with the flowers?

Roth: No.

Riess: This is the most unpicture-taking family.

Roth: [laughs] I know, isn't it dreadful? I still have the golf cart outside!

Riess: Well, maybe we can have you pose in it for some pictures!

Did you picnic in the Filoli gardens?

Roth: We had loads of picnics. They were great. My husband was a great picnic fiend, so we were always having picnic dinners.

Riess: Would you go to just any place in the garden?

Roth: No, we had a very pretty place to picnic by our tennis courts and we had a grill there. So we used to go there, and it was twice as much work as having dinner in the house. A picnic is! It is more work than anything in the world.

Riess: Because you never can remember everything!

Roth: Well, that's it. You get over there and you've forgotten the Worcestershire or something! [laughs] We would have to go all the way back and it was a long ways.

Other Gardens

Riess: What other great gardens were there to visit on the Peninsula?

Roth: Well, I wouldn't think that there would be another. Filoli is a big garden! [laughs] You have twelve acres of garden; that's a big garden.

Riess: So there was nothing that was truly a celebrated garden.

Roth: No, I don't think so, except the really great garden here is Mrs. [Starr] Bruce's garden and she is in San Mateo.

Riess: Who is she?

Roth: She was a Welch, Andrew Welch's daughter. She has a very beautiful garden. Hers is Japanese and it is beautiful and Miss Worn went there, too, and she did quite a bit in her garden. It's different from my garden. It isn't a mass of flowers. It's the Japanese style. To this day it is a beautiful garden and it is being shown all of the time.

Riess: When you go around the country, do you visit gardens, Longwood and so on?

Roth: Oh, yes, I go to all of the gardens that I can.

Riess: Did you come back with ideas that you wanted to implement?

Roth: Well, you always learn something, something in color or flowers, plants, or something to try. The wild garden with the Bourns was really almost nothing. I have done that all myself because I enlarged that to twice its size. And the picking garden for flowers. Now they have to put in an herbaceous border which was not in before and as time goes on the garden is better than it was when I had it. It has improved.

Riess: It is better now?

Roth: Yes.

Riess: Just because time is good for all gardens?

Roth: Yes, and because everybody with an education is working on it, so when a tree dies they put in something better.

VII A TRIP TO FILOLI

[Interview 7: May 11, 1981]##

[En route to Filoli by car with Mrs. Roth and Kermit in the front seat, Riess in the back seat, using the old route, Skyline Boulevard]

Roth: [speaking of Indian mounds on Filoli property] We found everything, bodies, bones. The college here did the digging and they did it for about three years, and they have a wonderful collection of things. But we've stopped it now. The college claims it's very valuable because the Indian ruins that they found there were from a very early group. Years ago, when I first moved to Filoli, there was a big mound, a huge mound, that they called the Indian Mound. Well, I didn't know anything about it. Stanford asked if they could use it and I gave them permission and so they took over. It was an Indian burial ground. And right near that, you see, is this other part, and one of the professors from the college had an idea because this was not a mound, it was just flat, so they've been digging down, like tunnels. And they brought their classes there and they seive all the soil.

Riess: It's interesting to watch.

Roth: Oh, very interesting, and the children [students] have gotten so much out of it. But we stopped it finally because they decided it shouldn't be done any further. And I think there was probably some comment about the college here getting it all.

But this group of Indians were earlier than they had ever thought. They knew the Indians that lived here in certain years, I suppose after the missionaries came, but this was a very early group.

[passing turnoff to narrow, graveled road]

Riess: You used to drive down to Filoli on that little road?

Roth: It was the only road, the Woodside road. This road we're on is a new road. Now there's a road through the back, over there, and that road in the back is the original Filoli road.

[entering estate]

Kermit: Mrs. William P. Roth. [to gatekeeper]

Roth: Now, this is San Francisco property.

Riess: And what about these occasional plantings of pines?

Roth: Old Christmas trees. I planted all those and they've finally grown. This one's so pretty; he's the last one I did.

Riess: Now, tell me every place you laid your hand upon the land.

Roth: I put in this fence, because I ran horses there, and sowed this with hay, which made it very pretty. I never have time to work on these trees here [stands of oaks, second growth]. They need work.

Riess: [as car turns in front of house] You have worked on these oaks.

Roth: Oh, yes, when you can. Now here's one that's dying--oh, no, it's just the bugs. Now this is a blue spruce, and up there you see--there should be a plaque. That's I don't know, something. It's given by the County of San Francisco. And something to me.

Think how old these olive trees are. [to Kermit] Go in by the kitchen.

Look at the size of these trees here. I want you to see these. They're the oldest. Now originally, when we bought this place, this was all a beautiful lawn. And you see the fence? I've had to put that because we have to fence the garden in because of the deer--we get so many deer. And this lawn we gave up during the war [lawn on east side of the drive paralleling front of house] when we had to conserve. And I think at some period they're going to start it again.

Look at the holly trees here. [turning around in front of entrance]. [When the Bourns were here] the front door was just the same, but I did all this planting. Really the Bourns only did the two holly trees. The maples they planted. The rest of the planting I did here.

Just look at the size of these yews, though. They are very difficult on account of they're so big now.

[arriving at kitchen courtyard, talking to one of the gardeners]

Riess: Has it come of age, this garden at Filoli? [referring to comment about replacing old plants]

Gard: Yes, I think so. It's sixty years old now, and a lot of things are showing their age--and this is about the time for replacement for a lot of things--but right now everything is at its peak, and as large as it's going to get. And it's looking better than a lot of people have ever seen it. That's just time. But as Mrs. Roth says, a garden takes a lot of time.

The Garden Design

Roth: [Hadley Osborn arrives] Hadley, I'd like you to meet Mrs. Riess, from the University of California. Maybe we could just step into the garden. She asked me some questions the other day about the type of garden this is, and I couldn't really answer.

Osborn: It's Filoli, that's the type of garden it is.

Bruce Porter designed the garden, and he very much did not like the sort of informal gardens that were going up in California at that time. He said the paths would meander, and they always looked as though they had no reason for doing that. He felt that gardens should afford a sense of protection and shelter and of course we're right here in an undeveloped wilderness, and his feeling was that the gardens should act as gracious outdoor rooms, which this sunken garden does.

And as you can see they're really juxtaposed, right against the wilderness. You look here and your eye just follows the grey of the olives to the sunburst locust, which is that tree right there, and it just goes on up the hillside, which is also Filoli.

There are a lot of 17th century garden elements that are embodied in this, but there are a lot of ideas taken from later English gardens also. They are predominantly formal. There is only one part of the garden, which is the woodland garden, which is informal and has a few of the meandering paths which were so much in vogue at that time.

Riess: Had Bruce Porter gotten his training in the east?

Osborn: I don't know. I do know that there was a gentleman that brought together a circle of people, and he was the pastor of the Swedenborgian Church, and there was a circle of people that admired the pre-Raphaelite

Osborn: and like them they practiced in various media. I am told that Bruce Porter's income came mainly from work he did in stained glass, and it interests me that when you look at these you almost see stained glass patterns in the designs. They were a circle of friends--the gentleman who designed the house, Willis Polk, the gentleman who did the murals in the ballroom, Ernest Peixotto, were all part of this group. As I say, all of them practiced in various media. The remarkable thing about this garden is not only that it is beautiful, but that that Bruce Porter's design is still extant.

Mrs. Roth just did something incredible, and I'll say it while she is right here, because nobody else does it, and that is, she kept the gardens alive, she kept them vital, she enriched them with plant material, but she didn't do what I would have done: I would have made a terrible mistake, I would have started revising the gardens, I'd have remodeled them, put things here and there to accommodate plants. And yet Mrs. Roth kept them vital and alive and yet with total respect to the original design. The only thing that was added, really, was the swimming pool, on the other side of the hedge. And it fits just beautifully. But I don't know of anyone else who has managed to do that. Either they say, "Isn't this beautiful?" and pretty soon the plants get old and out of scale and it just becomes kind of a cemetery--

Roth: The only problem about the pool was the scale, which made it very expensive. My husband kept saying, "Why do we have to have a pool this big?" Well, we had to have it that big because we had that big space there.

Riess: Who designed the pool?

Roth: Lurline Roth was the designer. [laughter]

Osborn: For the pool itself, I don't know, but the pool pavilion was done in two stages. The side parts were done first, and I believe that was Alex Yuill-Thornton, wasn't it, Mrs. Roth? Then the center part was added to protect against afternoon winds, with the sliding glass doors.

Originally the gardens kind of stopped. Everything beyond the hedge was open field, as you see beyond the terrace there, just extended up to here.

Riess: And the yews?

Osborn: These we transplanted. Everybody told Mrs. Roth she couldn't do it. [laughter]

Riess: Well, it is the extended view that is so marvelous.

Roth: As a matter of fact, they had intended apparently to put a pool in at some period, so they built a pool house.

Osborn: The pool house is on the other side of the yews. It's underneath part of the tennis court. There are dressing rooms, there was a boiler room, that sort of thing.

Riess: From where we stand, there are so many views. It seems enormously complex. Is this the way the garden is supposed to be entered?

Osborn: There are many ways of entering the garden, and they all work. This long straight axis path is actually an extension of that long hall and the dining room. And there is another path, which we call the yew allee, which parallels it. So they are the organizing major axes. But then within them, within the walled garden, there is a series of very intricate formal designs. And I think it works much better than most American formal gardens do because no matter where you are you get pleasant vistas and new angles on things. Whereas in many American formal gardens you have to look at exactly one spot to see it work.

The center of the garden I always think of as being the walled garden as you see it from the teahouse.

Riess: [referring to hedge at which they are standing] Is this a traditional hedge height?

Osborn: It's a little higher. It's gotten higher as the years have gone on. We had a massive accident on Easter weekend; we lost a huge limb from this oak. You can see the damage it did to this hedge. But we're just going to cut it back, bit by bit and eventually we're going to work this back to a slightly lower level.

Riess: You just inch it down?

Osborn: Well, this accident gives us an opportunity for experimentation. [laughter] We're going to do that area fairly severly, because we have to do work on it anyway, and we're going to see how it works. And if it does well, then we will do this one down to that level.

When I say bit by bit, I mean a section at a time. We take enormous pride in maintaining these gardens immaculately, because that's the way they work, if they are immaculate, and we hate to have anything that isn't just so. So we don't like any major area with major disruption at any given time.

Roth: I don't know why we don't plant more of those trees, they're such pretty trees.

Osborn: The sunburst locust. It's such a beautiful tree. It's just starting to green up.

Roth: I got that from the Wayside Gardens.

Osborn: That's magnificently placed again, Mrs. Roth.

Roth: I just stuck it in.

Osborn: Well, it's absolutely perfect. It's just starting to green out. You see the color at the top, that's the golden color. Then it turns green. It also colors in the fall, but it's not as fabulous as it is in the spring.

Riess: I'm beginning to get all the good smells around here too.

Osborn: Mrs. Roth added a lot of plants that add fragrance, especially around the house. I think it's one reason people love Filoli so much.

By the way, Mrs. Roth, I was in charge last week of a convention of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboretums and I cannot tell you how many people told me Filoli was the most beautiful garden they had ever seen.

Roth: I think it is. I'm afraid I'm biased. Everyplace you look is beautiful.

Riess: What is the difference in intention and concept between this garden, and a garden like Longwood? Can you answer that? Is there some westernness here?

Osborn: I don't think it's necessarily a difference of its being western, other than plant materials that are in it. I think the same sort of concept was used. But I do think that because it's set in the middle of a very wild and natural area, that Bruce Porter's idea of having the garden provide protection was very important, the idea of the walled garden, the hedges here, the sunken garden--that these were places you could go into that were just eminently civilized.

Roth: [speaking of the background of the hills] And the beauty of it is that it should always be that way because it is city property.

Osborn: Actually the garden underwent changes [earlier]. I recently got early pictures that are dated, and initially they made some mistakes in the walled gardens with their plantings--they tended to overplant and had too much. And of course if you go in there now, it's just beautiful, and clean. And so it has undergone revisions through the years. But somehow the design works well enough that the basic framework has always remained intact. And Mrs. Roth was just remarkable in preserving it, and yet adding so many materials--the camellia

Osborn: collection which is massive, major, an historically important camellia collection. So many of the magnolias, many of the rhododendrons, all these things were added, and yet added so they fit, and they enhance.

[noticing birds] We have members of the Audubon Society coming once a month now, and they not only count the numbers and species--this is a major resource for them--and also they are documenting the bird life around here so that if there are any changes in management practices, we might notice.

Roth: I think it's amazing that the bugs have eaten the oak trees here, yet where I live, my oaks have every leaf on.

Osborn: Since I've been here, Mrs. Roth, this is the first year that we're going to have oak moths. But they are going to be here this year.

Roth: They've had them so many years, and they always say the oaks are going to die, and they come back.

Osborn: You see, we're surrounded by oak woodlands, and it's just impossible to [control it by spraying]. If they got very bad on one area, there is a new spray which only hurts the oak moths and nothing else. It's a disease that affects oak moths. And we might use that. But basically it's something we'll live with.

In the Gardens##

Roth: What's going to happen to the pomegranates? Do you think you'll have to start new ones? They're getting oversized aren't they? I would think you would have to go back to the original.

[walking along the dining room hall axis, south]

Riess: [looking at cineraria] They are perfect, each one a bouquet.

Osborn: Mrs. Roth always used to give her cineraria to the Strybing Arboretum Society plant sale. I remember being down here years ago [Osborn was formerly with Strybing Arboretum] and picking up cineraria.

Riess: [observes gardener spraying the rose garden]

Osborn: We don't have public tours on Monday. Any spraying or anything like that that has to be done we do on Monday.

Riess: Are flowers still being grown for cutting for the house?

Osborn: A few of the rooms in the house are furnished now, and as we do that we have more use for floral arrangements. There is always a floral arrangement in the tea house.

Riess: There is a Lurline Roth rose, isn't there?

Roth: No, I think that's one thing there isn't.

Osborn: We have a Lurline Roth rhododendron, but not a rose.

Roth: And in Hawaii we have something.

Riess: Do you do any hybridizing here?

Osborn: No, and I don't think we will. That's not something we would do. We do get the new All-America selections each year and we get them donated.

Roth: It's a beautiful one this year.

Osborn: [looking at huge, sixty-year-old stone pines]

There was one over here that matched these two and it fell a year ago last January, demolished this wall--I'm very pleased with the restoration--and also the iron gate and so on. I called Mrs. Roth the morning when we found out about it, and her first reaction was, "Thank God there was nobody hurt."

Riess: Why did it fall?

Osborn: Well, there is a lot of weight on top. And this was a freak. It was a massive storm. It happened late Sunday night. I heard it, but I didn't know what it was. I'd been working in the office and it had just been pouring. Old Cañada Road was overwashed, and the lawns were flooded, and I was afraid the culverts were plugged up, but they were draining--it was just so much water pouring in.

And then I remember that the reservoir up the hill had overtopped one year and caused a great deal of damage, so I drove up there, but it was all right.

As I was coming down, I didn't see the lightning, but I heard what I thought was thunder. There was a tremendous gust of wind and I heard what I thought was a sharp crack of thunder and then the rolling. Well, what it was was that one of the trees was absolutely overladen, there was no support, the ground was sopping, it got hit just right, and the crack I heard was when it fell and then just the crown going over was what I thought was rolling thunder. It was perfectly healthy. We have a round from it in the carriage house. The roots were perfectly healthy.

Osborn: Of course we became concerned about these trees, but you see Mrs. Roth through the years always had these opened up, there's always good air flow.

Roth: I told you Miss Worn said to keep them like a bouquet.

Riess: Across the street from me in Berkeley, in the house where John Gregg, who was the first professor of landscape architecture at Berkeley, lived, are two great Italian stone pines that he planted from seeds he picked up in the Borghese gardens on his honeymoon. They are not as big as these, probably because they are on a hillside.

Roth: Of course these get too much water. I've already taken down two gingkos because they got too big.

Riess: Were the stone pines here planted from seed?

Osborn: Yes, I'm told they were planted from a cone that was picked beside the Appian Way. The one that fell, we counted the rings, it was 58 years old. It was planted in 1922, which was about the time the walled garden was being developed.

Roth: [walking toward herbaceous border] It was a picking garden for me. And these apple trees, these are the ones that came from the Exposition at Treasure Island.

Good Morning, Emily, I'd like you to meet Miss Riess.

Riess: All along the path, people doing interesting things...

Osborn: We depend upon our volunteer labor. The glamorous part is done by Emily. [conversation with Emily Brown]

Emily Brown did arrangements for this convention we had last week, Mrs. Roth.

Oh, I love that blue salvia.

Roth: Isn't that beautiful. That is lovely.

Osborn: [looking at knot garden] It's due for another haircut fairly soon, but the new pattern is working out very nicely on the north one, much better than the old one did.

Roth: This [knot garden] was given by the Woodside Garden Club.

Osborn: [discussion of a large weed in the knot garden] I think one can take that out, Emily, I don't think that adds to the pattern. [laughter]

Osborn: This knot garden has worked well from the beginning, with the exception of the yellow. We had a chrysanthemum that froze out every winter, and that's a yellow thyme in there, and I'm not sure that that is going to work either. We may have to redo that. This one [adjacent knot garden] we completely redid last year.

Riess: We? You work with the club.

Osborn: They provide the design, and we put it in, and they provide the funding for it, for the labor and getting the plant materials.

One of the interesting things about Filoli as a garden is that there are such a variety of hedging materials and it's again something that you'd never see in an eastern garden. Even though they could do it, but somehow it hasn't been done. But we have a copper beech hedge here, the customary laurel hedge, several holly hedges, the rose-of-Sharon hedge here.

Riess: The California poppies in that distant field?

Osborn: We helped nature there. We plant wild flowers, and we are restoring that as an orchard, bit by bit. Down at the lower end of that are daffodils that have been naturalized over the years. Absolutely lovely in early spring.

Riess: Where do you get your bulbs?

Osborn: Our biggest bulb order, and our most expensive, is tulips, but of course they are so beautiful. We order those each year. The daffodils we order a few each year for pot displays, and then we naturalize them and they will come back again and again.

We plant the tulips on close centers, six-inch centers, with the result that you get a really nice effect. But we can't [save them from year to year], they need much more winter dormancy, and the cost of refrigeration would be way too much.

Roth: That [area] used to be the vegetable garden.

Osborn: And it is again, by the way. Those of us on staff, Mrs. Roth, are in free time putting in some vegetables.

Roth: Oh, good.

Riess: That bench with the carved design?

Osborn: Yes, that bench, and we have more, was given to Mrs. Roth in honor of her last birthday, by some friends. Given to us in celebration of the birthday.

Riess: Looks like you have an adequate supply of bees.

Osborn: Oh, more than adequate. We had some bees swarming in the upstairs sitting-room, Mrs. Roth, by the porch.

[Mrs. Roth leaves the walk, and Osborn and Riess go on]

Osborn: [in response to Riess comment about Mrs. Roth's pleasure in seeing the current state of Filoli] Yes, she visits often. I've discovered that if I come down here for the newspaper or something I'd better be clean-shaven and presentable.

This yew-allee lawn is new. It's going to be ready for its first mowing very soon.

Riess: You had to replant it?

Osborn: The initial tours just completely wiped it out, and the watering system broke down. The tours are now going to have an overlook on it. It's such a narrow lawn, you can't have people walking through it and maintain it.

You know, all the time Mrs. Roth lived here, she was tremendously generous about use of the property for garden clubs. (The first time I saw Filoli I was in charge of a convention of the American Rhododendron Society and Mrs. Roth very generously provided access to the gardens for that.) As a result it's been much easier to maintain this as a public property because people thought so well of Filoli.

This [wild garden] is the only informal part of the garden. Rhododendrons are out now, azaleas a little earlier, and the dogwoods are just going over, and again, a lot of camellias.

Riess: The oaks for a canopy.

Osborn: This is all second-growth oak-madrone woodland, right in here. The major virgin oaks are those huge specimens next to the house.

Riess: What is your position and title here?

Osborn: My title is executive director of Filoli Center. Filoli Center is a local non-profit corporation. The central portion of this was given to the National Trust. We have a fifty-year lease with the National Trust to preserve, maintain, and provide for public benefit. And there's a local board of trustees. The founding president of that was Wally Sterling, Dr. Sterling, who was president of Stanford for years and years, the glory years of coming to greatness. The quality of people that are associated with Filoli is simply very high and that is

Osborn: again because of the tradition of public service that the Roths had while they owned Filoli, and if you wish to develop it as a public garden you can ask somebody like Wally Sterling to do it, and he'll do it.

Riess: What is your training? Are you a landscape architect, or horticulturist or some such?

Osborn: My academic degrees are in English literature, but I became involved in the administration of public gardens many years ago, just by accident, not planning.

[looking at petals of camellia across the path] The gingkos in the fall will shed their leaves all at once, and it's just a beautiful golden carpet.

Roth: [meeting Osborn and Riess again] Now there are our two University of California trees.

Osborn: The dawn redwoods.

Riess: So pale.

Osborn: They just unleafed. They get darker. They are very nice specimens. Actually they have very nice fall color. I always loved the name. It fills the mouth, Metasequoia glyptostroboides.

Roth: These are the bricks I told you were made to order for Mr. Bourn.

Osborn: We had trouble when we had to match bricks on that [restored section of] wall.

[discussing mounds of snail repellent on new pansy beds] Of course interestingly enough most of our plant damage is from birds. The birds hide in the hedges and then come out. We put cages over the ranunculas.

Riess: There's an oak that's been given a lot of help. [west end of lawn at back of the house]

Roth: Help! It's been treated like a baby. Every year they said it was going to die, and every year it lived.

Osborn: [discussing major pruning in the oaks] Mrs. Roth always had an opening in the shrubbery as you crossed the bridge, and it had grown over and she suggested to me that we have a "window" so we finally went down there and looked around and of course she's absolutely right. It's marvelous as you come in to get that one glimpse of that beautiful field and the redwood in it.

Roth: The original idea was the lawn and the little brick wall, right into the field. But in those days they didn't have enough planting to have enough deer [to be a nuisance]. And the only thing the deer won't eat is red ruby azalea. [laughter]

Osborn: Any plants you see in the courtyard the deer won't eat. There is no fencing around that. Otherwise, either through walls or through fencing we keep the deer out. We lost the limb on this oak shortly after I came here and I was too dumb to understand that it lowered the fence enough so that the deer could jump over, so that we had deer in here for about two nights. And they do incredible damage.

Roth: This is an interesting hedge. It's all little strips of a hedge. [below part of terrace wall that supports citrus in pots] Those Chinese pots were here. These pots are ordinary, but we get them made to order so they are all that shape.

This is a difficult place. This is a common rhododendron, but it grows well there. It gets too much sun. We had an oak tree in there before.

The people that we have working here, they're all people that love the garden. Don't you have that feeling, as you walk around?

In the House

Riess: [in house, walking through restored rooms] What is the arrangement with the Getty Museum? [referring to the massive mirrors, etc. that Osborn identifies as being on loan]

Osborn: The initial loan is for five years, but the intent is that it will be a permanent loan. We also have things on loan from the San Francisco Museum.

I'd like to tell you a story about Mrs. Roth. We were down in the [museum] basement looking over things, and the head of the Fine Arts Committee is a gentleman named Ted Griffith, who is the owner/operator of Regency House on Jackson Street, and he is estimating the length of something and he said, "I think that's six feet." Mrs. Roth's daughter Lurline said, "No, no, no, that's eight feet." Mrs. Roth looks at it and she says, "I think that's just a couple of inches over seven feet." It was seven feet, two inches. [laughter]

Roth: [looking at rug given to carpet the room] Now this is a good deal like the old rug I had here, better. The lights are from the Getty?

Osborn: Yes, the mirrors and the consoles are Getty, the tapestries from the de Young, the Italian credenza is from the de Young.

[Riess and Roth settle into what was the game room to talk further]

[Osborn mentions Indian burial mounds and the diggings]

Riess: Why do you think twenty years from now it will be less disturbing to dig there?

Osborn: It's true. You find out new things. The early archaeologists, they disturbed dust that would now tell us a great deal. You know in Sweden, the old tombs, it's just the law, you can only open one every twenty year period, to take advantage of new technology of excavation. It [Indian mound] is a particularly interesting site because it was abandoned before there was any contact with western civilization.

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Roth: [in response to question about how the room Riess and Roth are in was originally furnished, and where trophies are kept]

I had large cabinets made for my great big silver trophies, so they were always behind glass. I had one, two--four large cabinets. They were absolutely filled with trophies, filled to the brim. But I've given them now to museums, and some of them I sold with the sale.

Riess: They were solid silver?

Roth: They were all solid silver, because in the old days they didn't give plated trophies. They were really beautiful trophies. Some of them are in the museum in Louisville. Some of them I've given to Missouri. Then I've given them away. But the room was really quite a thing for people to see, and where I'd won them, and so on.

Riess: And in this room, the deer head. Was that a trophy?

Roth: The deer head: there were two, and when we left the house my son said he'd like to keep this one. (These were deer that were shot in Ireland at the Lakes of Killarney.) Bill wanted to keep this. Then after keeping it he didn't want it, and it's still here. Well, then I gave the other one to Mr. [Billy] Vincent. And he had to carry it back to Ireland. [laughs] I think it was a bit of an ordeal. I offered this one to him too, but he doesn't seem to want it. And I think we'll leave it here--the Irish deer. You can't shoot deer here. You see, this is a reservation.

Riess: It was interesting to tour the ballroom with Mr. Osborn. When you gave your beautiful parties did you cover or drape the walls, the murals?

Roth: Oh, we never put anything on the walls in the ballroom. That we always left as it was. It was the halls that we decorated, and then we took the center court in front of the house and tented it in, and then took the windows out of the ballroom on the side, and put ramps right outside. So we made a new big room in the courtyard, and then we used this [the north end] for the entrance. No, the ballroom walls have never been touched.

The Parties: Tony Duquette

Riess: [artist and designer Tony Duquette had been discussed off tape earlier] Just where were Tony Duquette's tapestries then?

Roth: All down the hall, and in the entrance hall, and in the tent--which was the whole courtyard.

The debut parties I gave were really different from most peoples'. They were really beautiful. And Tony Duquette did most of them, and he did really marvelous things. And Miss Worn did too.

Riess: I've read about a party where the hedges were sprayed white and there was blue gauze, with deer painted on the gauze.

Roth: I think that's the one Bella Worn did. That was marvelous. Tony did two. You might write him and ask him to write a little something about that.*

People still talk about those parties, because he did really marvelous things. And we grew all the flowers for them specially and they were really beautiful.

Riess: One of the parties was the year your daughters came out?

Roth: No, they were both granddaughters.

Riess: When Tony Duquette and you were putting a party together, how much time went into the planning?

Roth: Oh, last minute, he'd do it all the last week. But everything would be made at home, at his place in Los Angeles--Pasadena I guess. He'd bring things made.

Riess: How did you find him?

Roth: Oh, everybody knows Tony. He knows everybody in San Francisco.

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*Appended

Riess: And there was no one in San Francisco who could put together these spectacular parties like Tony could?

Roth: No, not the same. He has done this lovely thing in Los Angeles now--I must go to see it.*

Riess: When the parties were over, what happened to all the things that he had created?

Roth: Then came the big trucks the next day. I always had to send all of my furniture out to Bekins [Storage Company] while Tony had all his things in. And the next day we got his things out--that took a couple of days.

Riess: Describe one of the parties, would you?

Roth: Well, one year it was the sunflowers. This whole hall was a hedge of sunflowers, all in bloom, all the way down. And those I had to plant--all summer we were raising sunflowers. Then they were all cut and brought in and put in like a hedge. Then one party he had a beautiful blue wooden boat in the pool, not the swimming pool, but the pool by the dining room. That must have been for Lolly Menzies. Bren bought that and has it in her house. It's very pretty.

Riess: A real boat?

Roth: Oh, it was floating in the water. Not too big, though. Bren has it on her wall in the breakfast room now, leftover from the party.

Riess: How did you plan the ideas? Did he think it up and then tell you?

Roth: Generally it was a surprise. Well, he'd say, "I'm going to use a tapestry..." He made tapestries once and then put real flowers like garlands in the hair, like real flowers.

Riess: Real woven tapestries?

Roth: Oh, yes, sure, woven.

Riess: Wouldn't you like to have kept them?

Roth: Well, I couldn't put the real flowers in. It was enough to take care of them for the night. I think he still has those. And I think he's using something like that in his decoration now, from the book I saw of his. You know Tony's colors are so good. And he is meticulous in following everything through. So that's why I really had to get my furniture out, because everything we had went.

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*"The City of Our Lady Queen of Angels," at the California Museum of Science and Industry, March through August 1981, was a tribute to Los Angeles's bicentennial.

Riess: And who catered the parties?

Roth: Oh, my Chinese cook. He managed. Unfortunately now he's older than I am and deaf and blind, so he can't cook anymore. But he was the most wonderful cook. Oh, my present cook did one party; Marie Claire did one.

Riess: Can you remember other parties?

Roth: For one we used leis from Hawaii, pikaki leis, and they were hanging on a tree, and the tree fell over. I remember that! Just before the guests arrived.

Riess: You pointed out the Christmas trees you had planted, as we came in.

Roth: Yes, [at Christmas] I always had two potted trees by the front door as you came in, with lights on them. The one inside had to be so big, with the ceiling [so high]--an eighteen-foot tree.

Riess: You didn't cut them from the property, did you?

Roth: No, I find it better to buy them. The same man always cut them, and he knew the house. And we always had a small Christmas tree in this window [of the game room] here. And a couple upstairs.

Riess: Did you use any decorators here?

Roth: [Mostly] I left the house as it--well, the ballroom curtains have never been changed. And neither have the ones in the French room. The library I have changed, and these I have changed maybe three or four times, because this room gets a lot of afternoon sun and the linen fades.

United Nations Site Consideration

Roth: The only time anything has ever been put on the walls of the ballroom is when they had the pictures blown up of Filoli when the mayor had the luncheon here when they were selecting a site for the United Nations. You see, this was the number one site. They all met out here and Mr. [Roger] Lapham was then mayor.

Well, naturally we were against it. You didn't want to be put out of your home! Roger said he'd help us all we could, if we'd let him have the luncheon here. So we had the luncheon, and fortunately it was the worst day you ever imagined. It rained so hard that

Roth: everything was just flooded, and all the writers, the media, from the east, from Philadelphia, Washington, and New York, thought this was the worst place they had ever seen, thought it was just dreadful, which was very lucky.

And they had--it just made me sick--they had all the blown-up pictures of what it would look like when finished, tacked along the wall of the ballroom. Which was the most pathetic sight!

Riess: Were you the hostess for that event?

Roth: No, I wasn't even invited to the luncheon. I was supposed to be out of sight.

Riess: Why did they think they could appropriate it?

Roth: They can. Roger said he couldn't stop them if they decided. But I think most of the foreigners--the English and French loved the house--but some of the other countries would like a place that was gayer. There was nothing to do around here, particularly, whereas in New York they could really enjoy New York.

Riess: I thought you were speaking of this house being chosen as the location for the conferences, but you meant for the headquarters?

Roth: This was one of the sites. I think they selected three or four.

Riess: Any others in the Bay Area?

Roth: No, they liked this because they could control this and security would have been easy to take care of.

Riess: Was it known generally, that this, Filoli, was being considered as the UN headquarters site?

Roth: Yes, oh yes.

Riess: Was there a hue and cry from people?

Roth: No, the hue and cry was from Lurline and Bill! I really cried! I couldn't stand the thought. Imagine, the garden would have been--well, the whole thing, it's all turned out for the best.

Concluding Remarks

Roth: I really think the feeling of this place, more than anyplace in the east, the people that work here enjoy it so much. I don't think they have that in any place in the east. I'm sure they're all paid workers [at estates in the east] and these aren't all paid workers. Mrs. Brown [Emily Brown] is one of our great horticulturists. And here she does this just on her own time one day a week. And to think what she lends to the garden, because she knows so much! Just a gardener can't do what Emily can do, and she loves it!

I run into people that I don't know at all and they'll say, "Oh, we work at Filoli, and we enjoy it so much. I can't tell you how we love it." They all enjoy working here.

Riess: A lot must be how it is managed.

Roth: Oh, Hadley, he's marvelous. We're so lucky to have Hadley, really lucky.

Riess: Interesting that you have avoided, or been spared, the people who would have advocated changing the gardens.

Roth: Well, there has been that too, but that has fallen by the wayside now. It's all fallen into a working routine. The beginning was a little difficult, but we've worked a little in the background, and I think it has worked out well.

Riess: When I spoke with Hadley he said how important it was that you had established such good relations with the garden clubs and the club members.

Roth: Well, I've been on the board of both garden clubs. See, at Filoli I wasn't in the Woodside district, and I'm not in Hillsborough here. So for that reason I was on the board of both garden clubs, which made it nice.

Riess: Are the two clubs competitive?

Roth: I think so. I think most garden clubs are a bit competitive. Here it has worked out very nicely. The knot garden, which Woodside did, and the herbaceous border, which Hillsborough paid for. And there has been a great deal of money put in by very generous people.

Riess: And the knowledgeable people in those groups?

Roth: Mrs. Brown couldn't be more knowledgeable. She's Hillsborough Garden Club. And then we have the same from Woodside, Mrs. Schilling. Mrs. Schilling did the knot garden, she did the drawing.

Riess: Hadley mentioned the Audubon Society. Did those groups come when you lived here?

Roth: No. And you can't open up a garden [to the public] unless you know what you're doing. You can't take a tour through and have the gardeners have all the hoses out that day. So I didn't have too many tours.

Riess: But you are pleased with how it is open and how it is being handled now.

Roth: Oh, perfectly happy. I think every day I come I'm lucky to know that it has turned out so well. As I said, in the beginning it was very difficult. To get started, you can move in and ruin everything easily.

Did you know that Filoli is booked up through next August already for tours? They have really done very well.

I worry a bit about the house. You see, I think of the house as I've lived in it and then when the house is empty you get kind of confused really when you start to put things in again. If the things aren't the things that you've lived with--I don't want it to become completely a museum. It could be with the museum things, but a livable museum. I think of it as a home, not a museum, and naturally, when everybody gives you things, you're going to have a museum. You can't help it. But when I die, everything in the house in Hillsborough that was in Filoli, if they want it, they will have it.

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TAPE GUIDE -- Lurline Matson Roth

Interview 1: September 22, 1980	1
tape 1, side A	1
tape 1, side B	14
Interview 2: October 6, 1980	24
tape 2, side A	24
tape 2, side B	37
Interview 3: October 20, 1980	42
tape 3, side A	42
tape 3, side B	53
Interview 4: November 13, 1980	61
tape 4, side A	61
tape 4, side B	76
Interview 5: December 17, 1980	91
tape 5, side A	91
tape 5, side B	102
Interview 6: May 4, 1981	112
tape 6, side A	112
tape 6, side B	119
Interview 7: May 11, 1981	126
tape 7, side A	126
tape 7, side B	132
tape 8, side A	139

A SPEECH BY LURLINE ROTH COONAN
TO THE DOCENTS IN TRAINING AT FILOLI,
September 30, 1980

I want to apologize if I am a little weary this morning. We've been one full week at a marathon in Reno. We've been experiencing the quarter horse futurity up there. We had a horse, and our whole family went up, my mother and everybody. We got in early this morning--but our horse made it into the finals! [laughter] So if I forget a few names and a few dates, please bear with me.

I am really happy to give you a little of the background of our family life at Filoli. During the years I lived here, I developed a great attachment for the garden and for the house itself. I am sure there are many of you that may regard it as a museum-like house, but for me it was always a very wonderful and happy home.

There were five of us in the family. My mother--her maiden name is Lurline Berenice Roth--and my father (I have a picture of him), his name was William Phillip Roth, and a brother who was named after my grandfather, William Matson Roth, and a twin sister named Berenice. Because she received my mother's middle name, and because I was the first born, I received her first name, Lurline. Don't be surprised as you go through the garden and think you're seeing double, because she is a docent here, too, and looks very much like me.

My grandfather was born in Lysekil in Sweden in 1849. When he was just a small boy, his parents died accidentally. But like most orphans, he developed a self-reliance. He used to watch the ships as they came and went from his native land. When he was only ten, he shipped out on a ship called the Aurora and was a handy boy. He received his education as he went along.

My mother often remarks about the cat-o'-nine [tails] which was a whip that was used for harsh discipline. He [grandfather] told my mother that as a little boy, he always used to run to his job to impress everybody that he knew what he was doing.

When he arrived in New York, there were stories of the Gold Rush. He eventually went on the Bridgewater, which was the ship that took him around the Horn to San Francisco. That time was the time, of course, of the Gold Rush; it was on everybody's mind. But my grandfather's love was still the ships and the sea. So his first job was on a coal barge that took him around San Francisco Bay and up and down the Sacramento River. It was during this time that he developed friendships with the two Spreckels brothers, Adolph and Theodore Spreckels. He often sailed with them on their yacht, which was called the Lurline.

Because of this friendship, and because of his affection for the name Lurline, he named his first brig (which is that ship over there) the Lurline. He later named a second Lurline, which was a steamship, the Lurline. There were two more ships to follow and today actually one of the giant container ships is called the Lurline. So because of his affection for this name, he named his daughter (which is my mother) Lurline.

Captain Matson was especially interested, of course, in establishing the Matson Navigation Company, and he also was founder of the Honolulu Oil Corporation. His life was dedicated to both passenger and tourist service to the Islands. He was the first in many things. He was the first to have a radio, the first to have cold storage, the first to have steamships. He actually did a tremendous job in developing the passenger service. In 1914, he passed away.

My grandmother's name was Lillie Low. She was of Scottish descent and she was born in Brooklyn. She was on her way to Hilo to teach at one of the plantations there and she actually sailed on the brig Lurline. It was there that she met my grandfather and their courtship started and they were later married.

My father was born as a citizen of the Kingdom of Hawaii and later--I believe it was 1898 when actually Hawaii became a territory of the United States--he became an American citizen. He was sent to the Oakland High School, and from there he attended Stanford University, and returned to Honolulu to be a member of a brokerage firm. He met my mother on one of her trips to the Islands and they were married in 1914.

After my grandfather died in 1917, my father became president of Matson Navigation Company, and later chairman of the board. My father was really largely responsible for encouraging tourist trade to the Islands and also for creating the white ships which not only went to Hawaii but to New Zealand and Australia. He always felt because the ships were so fine and they were building better and better ships, that they should have a beautiful hotel in Honolulu and he built the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. Actually, the National Trust [for Historic Preservation] is very interested in preserving this hotel today; there was talk of it being demolished for new high-rise buildings, but at a recent board meeting I believe that they mentioned that they were becoming very interested in this. My father's career life was dedicated to Matson.

We moved from our former Woodside home, which is called Why Worry Farm, when we purchased Filoli in 1937. The house was actually sold, but the stables are still in operation today and my mother attends many horse shows throughout the United States. She is still considered one of the outstanding horsewomen in the country. She managed to assemble an outstanding collection of horse-drawn carriages which are on display here at Filoli. This collection was originally owned by the Bourn family and came into my parents' possession when they purchased Filoli. At the time, they were in complete disrepair. I have a picture here showing the phaeton. This picture was taken at the Devon Horse Show, I believe. This was taken at a later time, but that is the phaeton that you see here in the carriage house.

She was very fortunate in employing a mechanic that had worked with the original Brewster Carriage Manufacturers. They were considered the finest manufacturers here and she had them completely refitted and restored to their original condition. They could actually be used for road use. She later gave this whole collection to the San Mateo County Historical Museum and they were kind enough to loan us this collection, as Timmy [Gallagher] told you the other day, that we have here. There are still more at the museum, if any of you are ever interested to see them.

Mother still maintains another collection, which she keeps at Why Worry Farm, and she has sent many carriages to the American Saddlehorse Museum at Louisville.

My mother owned and lived in Filoli for a period of nearly thirty-eight years and, as you know, she gifted the house and garden and a portion of the land to the National Trust, which was the thirty-nine acres, the original package. She also gave it with an endowment, and this endowment was to assist the National Trust with its properties.

Then she later that year gifted the eighty-six acres, which is called Parcel B, which you see on the north side here. She gifted that to the National Trust with the intent that she would will or give that to them at some future date. Then the remaining 528 acres was actually given to Filoli Center. They originally purchased it and then about three years ago she had a change of heart and she decided to reimburse Filoli Center for the price they paid at that time for the 528 acres. So now the piece is entirely preserved.

At that time--my father had died in 1963--she was living here alone and we didn't feel as a family that it was safe for her to live here any longer. Although she had several firm offers to purchase Filoli, it was her decision to give it to the National Trust so that people, like yourself, could enjoy it, and it's been a very happy experience for her, too. My father often enjoyed walking through the garden. In fact, he enjoyed Filoli every bit as much as my mother. Of course, he was the businessman so he didn't have the actual running of the garden. But in the mornings he often would walk through the gardens and chat with the Italian gardeners that we have and see the progress of the garden.

Louis Mariconi, who was the head gardener at that time, came to work for Mr. Bourn in 1915 and stayed over fifty-five years until his death in 1965. He would often see that my father had a bachelor button to wear in his lapel.

My father loved dogs. He was quite a huntsman, and the kennels are still behind the docent parking lot. My mother had her poodles and, of course, they were members of the family and allowed to be in the house.

My mother had many hobbies, and one of them was her birds. She converted the sleeping porch that you see upstairs. Originally, it was built for Bren and myself, but it didn't work out because it was over the garage here. So later she converted that into her aviary. She had amazing birds and very rare

ones from Africa, and a shama, beautiful song birds, and I especially remembered in her bedroom she always kept a mynah bird. This bird would mimic my mother exactly. She would follow the dogs and whistle and call us [laughter] and it was very confusing. Many of us didn't know whether it was Mother calling us or the birds! [more laughter]

In the den, the back sitting room that you see here, we had the little Spanish finches. This is something that I miss today greatly at Filoli, because when you walked in you could always hear either the song birds or the little finches, and to me it added a great cheerfulness to the house.

In the evenings, when my father came home from work, we often walked to the north gate. This was a daily trek that we always did. As you know, my mother had her foals and mares in the fields down there, and it was fun to watch them. In those days, the deer would come out of the hills and join the foals in the same field. When I drove up today I noticed the willows on the right side, which were always cut down, are beginning to grow up now, but you could get a lovely vista view. If you remember Timmy's first pictures of that valley, you could see to the mountains far more clearly than you can today. We often looked for the--I used to say Canadian but I am now corrected--Canada geese. It was very exciting watching them coming as they migrated from the north to the south. In those days, I believe, we had many more. They came in great flocks--two to three thousand of them. Sometimes my father got a little annoyed because he had just planted oat hay and they would come down and sweep it all up in one swoop and he had to replant it a second time.

In the evenings also we attended--I am sure many of you have been there already--the barbecue area which is up behind the tennis court, and this was great for family affairs because my father was an especially good cook and he enjoyed his new recipes and it was a perfect place for him to practice on the family up there. It was under the trees. It was by the tennis court and near the swimming pool so we just had lots of pleasure up there and I am very happy today that they are going ahead with the plans to change this into a luncheon place, because it's a perfect place.

My mother really is a knowledgeable horticulturist and she received the distinguished service cross from the Garden Clubs of America for her collection and propagation of plants and for the maintenance of the Lurline B. Roth gardens, as they are now known. (That is all that section in the walled garden.) During the period of both the Bourns and my family, Bella Worn supervised the planting of the garden. This amazing woman was getting on in age, but when my mother came here it wasn't easy for her to take on such a large garden as this, and Bella Worn supervised the planting of the garden. She carefully showed my mother and instructed her on all the plants of the garden and made her feel that Filoli was her own.

After Bella Worn died, she [mother] continued to follow the annual color of the garden, changing from the pansies and the violas in the winter to the pelargoniums and petunias in the summer, and then again the bulbs in the spring. Mother had a little black book which she always kept, and she ordered all her seeds. She kept a record of every plant that was planted.

I remember my mother mentioning Bella Worn's advice to her about the stone pines. (As you know, we lost one last year, but we still have one remaining.) She said, "You must always prune these like a bouquet of flowers." I always thought that was a wonderful saying. Together they planted the area around the swimming pool. Bella Worn died just after the Diamond Jubilee and she was doing her last--she did all of the decorations at the Palace Hotel and my mother said that she always came in this old Ford truck and she worked right up to the end. So she was really a great addition to Filoli.

During the development of the garden, my mother added many rare and unusual plants to the garden. I especially remember the Magnolia campbelli in the courtyard. This beautiful tree was given by the Strybing Arboretum to my mother, and if you've ever seen it in mid-February, all of a sudden these beautiful white blossoms come on the tree, and they look like white doves before the leaves appear. This lovely tree takes almost fifteen years before it has its first bloom, so it's a long, patient wait. She also planted the Dawson in the courtyard she planted all of that area there.

Then I especially remember around 1950 when the two Dawn redwoods were planted behind the east wall. As you know, these magnificent trees were discovered in China and they were brought here. These were among the first that were brought here. They were given by the University of California to Bella Worn for Filoli.

During the redevelopment of the garden, she also collected as many of the Camellia reticulatas that were available. Most of these came from Toichi Domoto's nursery in Hayward, which is a very famous nursery. She planted these in the woodland garden and in the walled garden to give a great mass of color. If you walk through the little camellia lane there you will notice the beautiful tree peonies. She also planted these, and the Domoto brothers were especially pleased to develop the yellow peony there. At their feet, she placed the little planting of the lily-of-the-valley.

The woodland garden had to be completely redone. It was discovered that it was full of oak root fungus and the whole garden had to be replanted except the section next to the tennis court.

Of course, she loved her rose garden. She planted that and she spent many, many hours dead-heading the rosebuds. In fact, one of the worst worries she had after Filoli was given to the National Trust [was] who was going to dead-head the roses. [laughter]

There were many plants that were planted at Filoli that weren't always successful. Especially, the deer ate some of them and it was discovered that the Azalea 'Hinodegiri' was one that did very well, and the deer didn't seem to bother [it].

Another one of my mother's favorites was 'Ward's Ruby.' This azalea became very popular in the 1915 San Francisco Exposition and she loved these azaleas. They could also withstand the heat exposure on the west side of the house. When you walk through the gardens, you will notice great drifts of these two plants together.

She opened the house for many charitable and botanical groups, and it was always open to her friends. My mother was very particular that the garden always look very neat. Whenever there was a tour, she was out with her little basket touring the garden, collecting all of the blossoms off the paths.

Leslie Thiringer is a name you don't often hear about. He was our head gardener for over twenty years. He came to this country from Hungary. He was of Hungarian descent, and during the time of the communists he had to leave. So he and his wife came to California. Somehow Leslie got in touch with me. He was looking for a job as a gardener. I knew that there was a position available here at Filoli and so he was hired as a gardener. Leslie didn't speak a word of English and he didn't have much of a horticultural background, but he was self-taught. He put himself through hort school and it wasn't long before he became head gardener here. The amazing thing about Leslie is that his speech was never too developed, and with all the Italian gardeners, I don't know how they ever had a conversation! [laughter] It seemed to be mostly a waving of the hands. Everything got done. He was a marvelous head gardener. Many people will still remember Leslie because he had a charm and he could convey to the people who came through the garden--it didn't matter who they were--but they just loved Leslie and then they loved the garden more.

I just hope--and I emphasize this many times--that when you go through the garden, I hope that you are going to be able to convey that feeling of Filoli, because Filoli should be enjoyed and it shouldn't be something that you just feel that you are forced to remember every name. I think it's amazing (and I must remark at this time) that during the thirty-eight years that my family lived here we only had two head gardeners. We only had Louis Mariconi and Leslie, which is pretty amazing, and I think that's why we had such a nice continuity to the garden.

We had wonderful Italian gardeners and they lived up in the cottage, which was built by Gardner Dailey, behind the tennis court. It actually was burned in 1960. I think there were over fourteen bedrooms and they had their own dining room and cook. But they had a happy life. They were older gardeners and they had their bocce ball tournaments. They made the olive oil out of the olives that you see here, and they picked mushrooms in the woods. Our young gardeners today in the garden are just marvelous and wonderful interns, and we're devoted to them, but when you think of this group of Italian gardeners, it was a different life for them because Filoli was a home. They had other chores to do. They had to cut wood and they had to do many other things, so it was a more or less different group of people.

Then there was the vegetable garden. We had a magnificent Italian vegetable garden. We had fresh fruits and vegetables that came in every day. I always remember in the spring we had fresh lavender bags that were made each year and put into the linen closets.

As for the house, the reception room was a magnificent room, and to see it then you'd never forget it. It had beautiful red damask couches throughout the room, and bunches of carnations and roses, all through the house. As you know, my mother did all of her arrangements. She loved flowers and I never remember seeing Filoli without plants and flowers all through the house.

On the wall was a beautiful sixteenth century mille fleurs French tapestry. This tapestry was given by the French government to Mr. Bourn during the San Francisco exposition. During the time that my mother lived here, and also continually now, she has a great devotion to the furniture here. It is her wish that on her death much of the furniture that she has in her house today will return to Filoli, and that tapestry will be one of them.

The greenhouses were filled with dendrobians and cymbidiums. We had a wonderful greenhouse man. I believe he was Norwegian. His name was Mr. Hansen. The house was always just filled with beautiful containers and plants. I especially remember by those windows there were beautiful Oriental containers, and they placed the orchids there with the little piggyback around to add greenery.

The library was a very welcome room for us all. I can't explain to you how it looked. When we had the bookcases filled with books, it gave a very rich feeling to the room, and the couches had a lovely celadon green material that was exactly, in fact, like the drapes that are in the room today. Then on the floor was a beautiful rose, crimson rug that was known as the Isfahan Palace carpet. This rug came from the Osbourne house on the Isle of Wight which was originally owned by Queen Victoria and Edward VII. This will return to Filoli someday.

Then in the far corner of the room was one of the most magnificent desks I've ever seen. It was George III and it was attributed to Thomas Chippendale and, in fact, I believe it came from the Earl of Warwick, and it also is illustrated in the English dictionary of furniture as one of the finest pieces of Chippendale. It was a marvelous desk because it had all of these secret little drawers in them. For children it was always great fun to try and find how to open them all.

The den, as I called it, or the back sitting room or drawing room (whatever you want to call it), was our family room. Of course, that's been all re-done. The drapes were done by my mother. This was the room where we had our tv and cards. It had a marvelous fireplace, and had a lovely bench in front. It was a very cozy room because the two couches were on either side of the fireplace with the bench in front, and we always sat there.

Then the lovely collection of calabashes (and they're not all here today, but I think there are a few in the bookcases to the rear of the room). Those calabashes are very, very old. They are the old Hawaiian containers, and they actually augmented a very fine collection from the Boston Museum when it was in San Francisco. Bella Worn loved to arrange flowers in these containers. I always remember them being used, especially in the ballroom.

The French room was usually used as an overflow from the dining room, but it was especially nice for the ladies who would meet there after dinner and have their coffee there. The men would always go into the library. It was always such a sparkly room with all of the chandeliers and, of course, it was known as the French room because of the beautiful French mezzotints that you see on the wall. My mother still has most of the furniture from the dining room. It had a beautiful Sheraton table in the middle and, as Timmy told you the other day, it had highback needlepoint chairs. In the corner was a lovely oak table where we often had lunch. Of course, in those days the oak tree in the courtyard was still there, so it wasn't as sunny as it is now. But it was a very cheerful place to have lunch.

As for the children and grandchildren, they have many memories. They still remember playing hide-and-go-seek up the long corridors upstairs. We used to come as a family every Thursday and every Sunday. All of the children--it didn't matter what age they were--they all came. We spent the night here. I was talking to my daughter as I drove home last night and she said, "Do you remember also we used to hide behind the mirrors in the ballroom in the passages down there?" Sometimes, in fact, when we were eating dinner, my father had to send word up to them to get back to their beds because they had such a lovely hide-and-go-seek time.

All of us well remember stealing cookies from Kee's kitchen. Kee was our Chinese cook that was here for fifty years. He used to get a little annoyed after awhile. He had cooked two dozen cookies and they had disappeared the next day. So when I look at that stove I always think of Kee because he always used to warn them that if he caught them again stealing cookies that he would bake them in the oven! [laughter]

Holidays were a special time here and, of course, Christmas was one of the most beautiful times. I especially remember the reception room had the most magnificent Christmas tree that went clear to the ceiling, which is nearly seventeen feet, and had beautiful Christmas decorations that my mother had collected for years. Then all through the house we had fresh holly and redwood wreaths on every window through the house and even upstairs we had those that the gardeners had made. On the mantle she had a marvelous collection of creches that she had collected from all over the country, German and Hungarian and every creche that you can imagine. They were on every mantle.

It was a family time, so we had three generations. We had my mother's friends, we had our friends, and then the children and the grandchildren. It was usually a party of about sixty or seventy people and we always had it in the ballroom. Each year there were different decorations, and Mother would plan every year with great care what was to go on the table. So it was always very exciting to walk into the room and see what was there.

The little ones, the grandchildren, were always allowed to sit at the tables in front of the stage. Then as they grew up and became young ladies and gentlemen, they were moved to the rear. But it always seemed that we had young ones in the front.

Of course, when Christmas came it was their great challenge to learn all the Christmas carols. It didn't matter if they were two or three. They knew "The Red-Nosed Reindeer," and they knew everything. They, as a group, would go around and serenade all of the tables.

We always had a Christmas choir from a local church, sometimes from Woodside, sometimes from an Episcopal church in San Mateo. These children would come usually during the middle of the dinner and they would sing beautiful Christmas carols.

It was an old-fashioned Christmas. It was a buffet. We had the table by the fireplace and we had all the Christmas trimmings, the chocolate log and the plum pudding and, of course, ice cream for the children. Then at the end of the party, at about 11:00, we would all gather in the reception room there. There weren't even enough chairs for everybody to sit on, so the children usually ended up sitting on the floor. Some of the older grandchildren played the guitar quite well. So they all performed.

Then we had a very nice person that came every year whose name was Mr. Alexander. He usually ended the Christmas. I always remember he sang the Lord's Prayer and it just made Filoli, it was just the nicest blessing, and everybody went to church or mass, or many did. I never did because I always felt--I always still remember--that final blessing.

Easter was a wonderful time and you can imagine hiding Easter eggs in the yew hedges! [laughter]

For me, I have many memories and it is always difficult for me each time to go through this, but I'm getting a little stronger. As a docent it was particularly hard. The garden lives, but the house, naturally, without my family and without the original furniture, never seems the same. But I must say, today we are getting back more furniture. We have some beautiful flower arrangers now and some of that old feeling <u>is</u> returning to Filoli. I guarantee you that when spring comes and that lovely wisteria starts drifting through the house again, you will have the same feeling that we have. I'm just very grateful that my mother's wish has been fulfilled and that you will be able to enjoy Filoli. [applause]

[followed by a brief question-and-answer period]

Victor Thompson: You didn't mention a lot of things that you have mentioned sometimes, that you rode horseback up in the hills.

Coonan: Oh, yes, every morning we rode horseback, along the old Cañada Road. Actually, Mr. Bourn changed the Cañada Road when he built Filoli. The original Cañada Road is the one in the rear and then he changed it to run along the east side of the house. But for us, that was just a lovely road and it went all the way down to the Spring Valley Lakes. So as a family we were on our horses every morning at 8:30 and we rode clear to the lakes. It was just beautiful. As you know today, we hope the 520 acres that runs up to the top of the hill will be a Nature Conservancy [holding] and we will have beautiful trails through there. We have the Audubon Society here collecting bird species and I believe there are over eighty different species, and we have bobcats that are very rare, and many things that will be interesting to study through the years. (Did I miss anything else?)

Victor: No. There was even a rumor of a mountain lion being there.

Coonan: Oh, yes, a mountain lion.

Victor: I'm not quite sure it was really a lion.

Coonan: It's true. I saw it.

Victor: Did you really?

Coonan: Yes, I did. It was very exciting. I called the rangers.

Victor: [to docents] At the close of the class we will take a tour by car through the rest of the property, so you will see the farm group that Gardner Dailey designed, and also the Indian village.

Coonan: I have one picture I think you'll get a kick from. I forgot to show it. I've always shown it to my classes. I think it's pretty cute. [shows picture of twins] Now, you tell which is which. [laughter] Isn't that great? This was taken at the Tally Ho party, years and years ago. It was called the Menlo Circus, I believe. Bren and I were queens and you can see how lovely and graceful we are! [laughter] We felt very important. I had to look at it to really figure out which was which. I figured that's me and that's Bren, but it's pretty tough.

Question: How old were you in that picture?

Coonan: Oh, eight or something like that. You see, I'm twenty minutes older, that's why I get my mother's name.

Victor: You might just mention the big debut parties.

Coonan: Well, we had two beautiful parties here. It was just a fairyland. All of the plants were grown here, and Mr. Hansen whom I spoke to you about, it was unbelievable what he produced. They were just unbelievable. It was just a bower of flowers all through, and the candlelight--you could watch in the gardens at night and usually they were in September, so that was our Indian summer. It was a beautiful time of year to see. But it was just beautifully done and it is very difficult to describe it without the pictures. But there were two lovely parties here actually. By the time they were getting down to the smaller grandchildren, then my mother said, "No more, that's it." But she did give two lovely parties for us. So that was beautiful. Are there any questions?

Question: I was going to ask you, the old Cañada road was never paved, was it?

Coonan: The old Cañada? Never paved, still dirt, and we will go up there. We go down by the Indian digs, to see where that is, we go up there the day that we go to the Bourn cemetery. So you will see all that area there. The Woodside Trail Club also has a key and they are allowed to come through, so often you will see horses going through there, but that's the Woodside Trail Club, which joins Mr. Phleger's property on the other side,which is a tremendous piece of property.

Mai Arbegast: Do you think that maybe some time in the future there might be the possibility of reconstructing that farm group so that we might have students who live on the place and who go to school here?

Coonan: Right now, Mai, it's not possible, but someday. It's a marvelous place to do it, and actually the foundation is still there and the plumbing probably, so that might be a wonderful place because it is just a little bit more private from Filoli so that they could be away from the actual center of Filoli. It would be a good idea.

Mai was in on the planning, when we first started, wasn't it, the planning of the garden? She is on the board of trustees now, and she has always been a great help to us in the garden. She is a knowledgeable horticulturist, she really is.

Victor: That would fit into the long-range plan of Filoli to be a garden training center.

Coonan: Of course, the hope would not only be that it would be a horticultural center, but a cultural center. This is what we are hoping to do, because this was the intent in the beginning, that it would be not only horticulture but also a cultural [center] where we would have symphonies and plays.

Coonan: I think Hadley Osborn has told you that many people think of the garden as a botanical garden. It isn't a botanical garden, it is a display garden. But as he said, many people ask you where the cactus garden is or where the something-garden is, and we don't have that because it was just to be a joy, and this is quite different from a botanical garden.

Victor: One more question over here.

Question: I was wondering if there was a definite plan for opening a lunch room, or is that still in the planning stages?

Coonan: Yes, definitely. We have a fund that was given to us, but we will continue. Eventually, it will be just a perfect place for people to have their box luncheons and have tables out there. The real problem is that we don't want to have Filoli become a brown bagger where everybody is dropping things. So that would be a lovely place to be and they would probably take down the old tennis court fence that was there and just have tables, and it would be a marvelous place.

Question: Would it be a restaurant, more or less?

Coonan: No, not yet. It was actually my brother's dream--he hoped that we could convert the kitchen to be able to have luncheons here like the Allied Arts, have the kitchen and have a few, but it takes tremendous time and money to go through this. It's much better to go slowly and do it right than to jump into this thing, and that is why we have gone at this pace, and I think it's a very healthy pace. We are going along, and you can see great progress every year, how it's changing. I think every year we will have something new added.

Question: Was Filoli a year-around home for your family?

Coonan: Oh, yes, once we moved in 1937. I think I was about fourteen when I came here, and then I stayed here until I was married at twenty-five. After my father died, my mother continued to live here alone, and she didn't mind it for many years, really didn't mind it, but then it got where it wasn't safe for her any longer. I think it's very nice that it's been done while she is still alive. As Hadley tells you, she comes up still and walks here every day before the tours and she keeps an eye on it. [laughter]

Question: What about household help?

Coonan: To tell you the truth (I did mention this), most of the help were here for the lifetime that we lived here. I don't know that we ever had a change. Most of them--Kee is still living. He is

Coonan: ninety-five, but he comes down to see my mother every year (the Chinese cook). Of course, four of them have passed away, but most of them that are living are just part of the family. It's kind of interesting, because David Patterson, who was the butler here, he worked for my family and he actually was just a young boy when he first came up. He came up with his aunt. I guess his aunt was the laundress and he used to come up and play around here when she was here. Then he came to work for our family, and he did all of that beautiful silver, which was the Bourn silver, and kept it up beautifully. It was all in that silver closet. David is a docent today, and if you really want to take an interesting tour, take a tour with David! [laughter] I don't know how much truth there is to all his stories, but it will still be interesting! [more laughter]

Of course, in those days they didn't have the dishwashers and the washing machines and dryers, so the sheets and everything were done here, and the laundry room, which runs under the kitchen, was used. We had a laundress and she did everything that was here.

As I say, Mother did all of the flowers. The flower room is off that room when you enter the ballroom there. (I don't know if all of you have been through the house.) But they'd bring the flowers in every morning in buckets, and she would arrange them herself. Later on, she had help lifting the vases. I don't know if I mentioned it today, but the den had the most beautiful pair of tangerine vases.

Victor: Next week we got to take a tour through the house, and we will take you upstairs, which is closed, of course, to visitors. The movie company, you know, furnished the house for the film,"Heaven Can Wait and they put down carpets in the upstairs hall. When we hoped to open the house the following spring for tours, Lurline and I had to get down on our hands and knees and measure that upstairs carpet and then cut it in half. The hall is nine feet wide and a hundred and three feet long. We cut that taupe carpet in half and that's the runners you have downstairs now.

Coonan: It's been a big saving to the floors.

Victor: Really. We couldn't have opened the house without that movie company carpet.

A lot of the tours, they ask you right away how many servants are needed to run the house.

Coonan: Well, it gets exaggerated. It gets exaggerated as to gardeners too. It sounded like we had an army here.

Victor: There are twelve bedrooms in the servant's wing, so that is the basis you could use.

Coonan: But some of them were used for a sitting room. They weren't all each in a room. So that has been greatly exaggerated. But this was the original dining room for the help. We converted this area. Leavenworth, who was our first executive director here, he lived here, and so they redid [it]. They cut through this wall, but the rooms here were all still original, and this was the help's dining room right here always. So none of this area has changed too much.

Another thing that I think is important that a lot of people miss: you know when you go down that long hallway when you enter the reception room, at the first turn down the transverse (the alley, the hallway) that goes to the dining room, it's rather a dark room, but when the family lived here they had a beautiful collection of icons, and my mother still has that collection. These Russian icons are very, very rare and they are just almost impossible to get. They have the beautiful silver and gold inlay on the outside--the heads are painted--and then the beautiful silver and gold. They were hung in that hall and that really illuminated the room, just from the reflection alone of those icons. They were beautiful.

Question: Will a tour ever be opened to the upstairs?

Coonan: I feel that it is going to be a long time before this happens. Mai, you are on the long range planning, aren't you?

Arbegast: Not at the moment.

Coonan: The problem is that there are certain bullding codes that have to be accepted. There is hope that some day perhaps there will be libraries up there, perhaps office rooms, something, or study rooms for interns. It will be utilized, but I don't think it's going to be right away in the near future. I think this will take time.

My hope someday is that we will have a history room and have the Bourn room with old photographs. I personally like photographs better than paintings, because I think they are a lot more accurate. [I would like] to have the mining days and the original pictures of the garden, and then our family could have another room and show the start in the shipping business, and Filoli and how it originated, and the gardens in my mother's day--a history room. Many people come through and I think they're interested in seeing what the background of Filoli is, and if it were done in different rooms, it would be a great idea to do it. But that's a dream.

Victor: We need to modify county building code standards now to admit historic houses, because they want to treat this house as though it were an elementary school and put sprinkler systems throughout the whole house, and this would be ridiculous in a historical context to have to do that. So a loophole is needed to provide for historic preservation.

Coonan: There has to be.

[end of question-and-answer session]

APPENDICES

A. "Captain Matson and the *Matsonia*," by Erna Fergusson 163

B. "Miss Matson's Betrothal," *San Francisco Examiner* 170

C. "Captain William Matson (1849-1917), From Handy Boy to Shipowner," by John E. Cushing 171

D. Mrs. William P. Roth, memberships in horse breeder and horse show associations 183

E. "Chief of Longview, 'The Great Parader'" 184

F. A drawing of the *Roderick Dhu* by W. A. Coulter 187

G. (Captain Rock) "Becomes a Farmer," *Hawaii Herald* 188

H. Captain Rock, and the *Levi G. Burgess* 191

I. *Falls of Clyde* by Captain Fred K. Klebingat 192

J. "The Roth Twins' Debut--THE 1939 Social Event" 200

K. Tony Duquette's notes on Mrs. Roth 201

L. "Christmases At Filoli Recalled," *San Francisco Examiner* 203

M. Filoli Center brochure 205

N. "The Flowering Shrubs of Filoli," by Mai K. Arbegast 209

O. "The Gardens of Filoli," by Albert Wilson 217

I

CAPTAIN MATSON AND THE *MATSONIA*

THE *MATSONIA* MOVED AWAY FROM THE DOCK IN MAJESTIC disregard of puffing tugs; of piffling paper streamers, torn and left adrift in aimless filaments of color; of shrilling passengers aboard leaning downward and waving to people ashore facing upward. San Francisco, as the steamer swung round and took command of herself, rose above the dock-sheds in pale piled-up cubes with twinkling windows. Between a dove-gray sky and a cool gray sea, mists entwined the buildings' tops until wind frayed them out and swept them off among the hills. Both city and hills tip steeply down into the bay; for the bay region and the Bay City lie close to the sea, drain into the sea, are swept, garnished, veiled, and given mystery by the sea. Without the sea both hills and city would be very different indeed — in history, in present actuality, and in future possibilities.

I gazed at the city we were leaving. With the continent at her back, but for most of her history cut off from it by bee-

tling mountains and implacable deserts, San Francisco early formed the habit of dealing with the world by water. Though her white discoverers came by land, Spanish captains were not long in finding the best bay on their empire's two-continent Pacific coast. In the sixteenth century Spanish galleons, on their way from Manila to Acapulco or Panama, found haven in St. Francis' Bay. As a Spanish outpost little Yerba Buena was connected with Mexico and with Spain by sea.

During the Gold Rush thousands came into "Frisco Bay" by ship, having sailed round the Horn or trekked across the Isthmus. Even before that Yankee skippers made a regular round from Alaska, where they got furs, to the Orient for tea and rice, visiting the Sandwich Islands on both passages. Whalers, the toughest seamen afloat, outfitted in San Francisco. Among them they gave the town's Barbary Coast a reputation as the luridest port west, or east, of Suez.

The Pacific was San Francisco's empire. Everything that moved across that vast expanse paid her tribute. The Orient was at home in San Francisco, and still is. The Sandwich Islands, as Hawaii was then known, sent New England's culture to California while Spanish was still her native language, and supplied wheat and meat to men too gold-crazy to plant a field or tend a herd. Foodstuffs go the other way now to islanders too intent on sugar to raise their own supplies. But the well-traveled sea lane from San Francisco to Honolulu must be as clear in a mariner's eyes as a wagon trace across a grassy prairie.

Two disappointments await the island-bound traveler who has read only the advertising copy. Three hundred miles of cloud bank, shivery and dreary, lie between the coast and that warm and sparkling blue so luridly depicted on the folders. And every steamer puts into the port of Los Angeles either going or coming. It was my bad luck that the *Matsonia* was

making the southern port on her outward journey. So we woke to a view of dull dock-sheds and to the clank of loading chains, which kept on all day. Many passengers departed for the city; others, experienced travelers, had come from San Francisco by rail; and the most favored ones held up the steamer for an hour as they came sailing grandly in by plane. It was too bad, really, and a dreary anticlimax to the thrilling departure through the Golden Gate. But in these days the man-made port of Los Angeles does more business than San Francisco's perfect bay, and most of the commerce with Hawaii goes in Matson ships. The last threat to the Matson Line's supremacy disappeared when Captain Matson bought out the Los Angeles Steamship Company about 1900. The "old captain" was a kindly soul who preferred partners to rivals and all his life he wooed or bought his competitors over to his side.

The grandeur and success of the Matson Line make one wonder about the man who founded it. But getting at the truth of Captain Matson is a baffling task. Old employees refuse to answer even innocuous questions, fussily fearful of betraying the tiniest mole on the revered founder's face; and incontrovertible facts run so close to the standard *Immigrant Boy Becomes President* that one is inclined to let it alone. Diligent delving might bring up a shadow or two with which to round out a portrait, but the few items that flicker through the mists of adulation hint at a likable personality and one important as a vital link between Hawaii and the mainland.

The best information about the captain comes from his daughter, Mrs. William Roth of California, who is so proud of her father that she seems to feel no need to prettify the tale. William Matson was born in 1849 at Lysekil, a tiny fishing village in Sweden. Both his parents were killed when he was very young, and his earliest recollections were of harshness and bleak religion in the home of relatives. When he was

164

ten, William ran away and shipped as handy-boy on a coastwise sailing ship. Of these years he seldom spoke. He had a gift for freeing his mind of hurtful images, and his childhood was nothing to linger over. But he told his daughter that he was so fearful of the cat-o'-nine-tails that he always ran quickly at every order. Whether he understood what was said or not, he ran. So he was seldom whipped. Between journeys he attended school a bit, but what he learned of Swedish books he forgot, though he always spoke the language.

At fourteen William shipped aboard the *Aurora*; doubtless still as "handy-boy," but growing fast into the stoutly built, hard-muscled man he was to be. His eyes were blue-gray and twinkling, his hair black, his skin — and this was true all his life — as fresh and delicate as a baby's. He left the *Aurora* in New York, where he learned English and heard all about the glories of California. In '67 he sailed before the mast on the *Bridgewater* round Cape Horn for San Francisco. At eighteen Will Matson was a full-grown man, two inches short of six feet in stature, with barrel chest, broad shoulders, and step as springy as a colt's just in from pasture. If he had not yet attained the weight he was to carry most of his life, he was living in a way to build a hundred and eighty-five pounds of solid muscle. A big, quiet-voiced fellow, and still willing to run to do whatever was to be done, he had no trouble finding work. He sailed as seaman on a couple of voyages to Puget Sound; but it was on a coal barge in the Sacramento River that his future awaited him. The *William Frederick*, Captain Charles Rock, was carrying coal from Mount Diablo to the Spreckels sugar refinery in San Francisco. Everything the young Swede needed for his start was involved in that run.

Within two years of his landing in San Francisco, William Matson owned the *William Frederick* and Captain Rock was working for him. Captain Rock had lent him the money: the

first of many men to size up William Matson as a man to trust. It was said he never asked for money he did not get, even when he was needing millions rather than a few hundreds. As captain, William Matson found it almost impossible to hire men who could keep the pace he set. His idea of that coal job was to load all day, sail all night, and unload the next day for the return run that night. Nobody he hired ever lasted long enough to find out whether the twenty-one-year-old captain took Christmas Day off or not. But he found time at the refinery to make friends with John D. and Adolph Spreckels, sons of old Claus, who dominated the waterfront and was building up a sugar business in the Sandwich Islands. Young Matson was always wise in his friendships.

In 1882 Claus Spreckels advanced him twenty thousand dollars to buy a three-hundred-ton schooner, which he named for Miss Emma Claudina Spreckels. With a cargo of lumber and manufactured articles he set sail for Hilo on the island of Hawaii. Captain Matson was on the bridge of his first seagoing vessel and he made a phenomenal run, bringing her into Hilo Bay in only three weeks from San Francisco.

In those days a ship's master was a trader. Every cargo was a speculation. He had to sell it as dearly as he could and buy cannily for the return voyage. So in Hilo Captain Matson was a very busy man, rustling business, trying to repay that twenty thousand dollars and save money toward another ship. He had to have ships, more and more ships. But busy as he was in Hilo, he had time to indulge his other love — for horses. William Matson learned to ride well in time; in Hilo he wanted only to ride fast. He raced with everybody, always determined to win. And he endeared himself to the Scots who had settled Hawaii's shore by his liking for cards, his gift for gambling, his ready sociability. He did not drink, but he could cuddle a glass of liquor convincingly. These Hilo friends of the cap-

tain became his business associates in many ways that linked his growing business with island sugar interests.

Hilo Bay was the scene of "our hero's" only shipwreck — a fortunate one, as it turned out. Lying there becalmed one night, his ship was caught in one of the bay's treacherous currents and smashed up against the harsh lava-girt coast. Down she went with all her passengers and crew. People ashore heard the crash and with ropes and baskets hauled all ashore; nobody was lost. It was a disaster; but in losing his ship Captain Matson had acquired a bride. For one of the passengers was Miss Lily Low of San Francisco, going out to teach at Hakalau. It was not long before Captain Matson and Miss Low were married. Their only child was named Lurline after the Spreckelses' yacht, a name which was to be further perpetuated by a brigantine, by a splendid "luxury steamer," and finally by a granddaughter whom the captain never saw.

Those early years were not easy. Besides the constant uncertainty about cargoes there was brisk competition from half a dozen lines of ships. Most of them made China, Australia, or the South Seas their objective, with Hawaii as a way port. Captain Matson always saw Hawaii as the objective and he made friends of important and influential islanders. He bought ships constantly; by 1900 he owned a dozen schooners, barks, and brigantines. And he was never afraid to try something new. His ships were consistently the first — at least on the Pacific — with each invention.

By 1900 Captain Matson was ready for big business. In February 1901 the Matson Navigating Company was incorporated with a capitalization of five million dollars, Captain Matson as president, and Walter D. K. Gibson as secretary. The next year the company bought its first steamer, the *Enterprise,* equipped her with a wireless, and converted her from a coal-burning to an oil-burning vessel. Matson was first in both

regards. It was characteristic of the man. In 1908 his company acquired twenty sailing vessels from the Planters' Line, owned by island people who were factors for sugar companies and who took stock in the Matson Company in exchange. The captain was true to his policy of getting his competitors to join in.

William Matson was no longer commanding a ship from the bridge, but directing a corporation from an office. It was a one-room office, crowded all day with captains reporting and taking orders, clerks with bills of lading, passengers buying tickets, friends calling, and Swedes telling their troubles. Harry Gregg, the company secretary in those days, remembers that the captain indignantly refused to give him a separate office where he might add his columns in peace. The captain, who never added his own figures and who liked a lot of people around, thought privacy all nonsense.

One gets a picture of a strong, shrewd man, self-confident and able. In ruthless San Francisco, where weak men disappeared completely, Captain Matson commanded both respect and liking. A man who was never associated with him said: "The captain was always far-sighted and knew just what he wanted to do. He couldn't always put it into figures, but he always had somebody who could. He was an excellent judge of men; he had employees he had picked up in Newport News, in the islands, or hired away from other companies. He paid them well and gave them opportunities to invest in his enterprises. I don't think any man ever lost a cent through trusting Captain Matson."

The captain was aware of his limitations; his lack of schooling always troubled him. He wrote nothing except his own large angular signature, which he used to trace over and over as he pondered a problem. He read print readily, though reading was never one of his pleasures, but handwriting baffled him utterly. He used to puzzle a long time over a letter, hand

it to his secretary, and say: "Now tell me frankly just what it says." In dictation his English improved constantly, for he reread his own letters, noted corrections quietly inserted, and used better phrases next time.

William Sellander, the captain's private secretary and the company's oldest employee, sums him up: "The old man could take somebody's skin off in sailors' language in the morning and then appear the smoothest diplomat you ever saw at night. He knew everything that went on. As soon as a ship docked he was aboard her. If any other skipper had made better time, if there was a spot anywhere, if the cargo had not come in perfect shape, the captain never missed it. And when it came to telling a man, he could do it. Just looking at a skipper waiting in the outer office, you could tell if he was due for a dressing down. But the old man was fair too. He was just as apt to give a bonus."

The captain's daughter remembers the same man, but with the half-amused, all-loving slant of a man's womenfolks. The first home she remembers was in San Francisco. She will never forget an April morning when she and her mother fled from its shaking walls and toppling chimneys; nor her father's annoyance, when he came into port next day, to find his family had left a comfortable house for a tent in the park. Fright was not an emotion the captain understood. After that they had a house in the country. And horses. The captain gave his daughter a love for fine animals, and they used to ride together, or race in their buggies. All together she had a happy childhood. Mrs. Matson was "socially wise," they lived well and did the necessary entertaining. But generally the house was informally full of people. The captain served as Swedish consul and he often brought compatriots home or recounted their stories, emphasizing his own accent and twinkling merrily. He hated to go to bed, but when he did he slept like a child until about

three in the morning, when he awoke and did his thinking. In the morning he generally talked over his plans with Lurline. Even when she was small, men used to try to get her to tell what the captain was planning. But his daughter could keep a secret too.

The man who had chosen ships in his youth never faltered in his allegiance to them. He invested in plantations or ranches only to provide cargoes for his ships. And he went into oil to get cheaper fuel for his steamers. Characteristically he studied the situation by himself, and before even his closest associates knew what he was about he had leased thousands of acres of oil land near Bakersfield, California. He had also acquired the right-of-way for a pipe-line under specifications which permitted "telephone lines, water lines, or any other lines." To get the project started he needed $100,000 in a hurry. In those days the San Francisco banks would lend any one individual on an unsecured personal note no more than $33,000. But the Crocker National Bank accepted the personal notes of two of Captain Matson's clerks to make up the amount he needed. It is the most striking instance of the way men trusted the captain's judgment as well as his integrity.

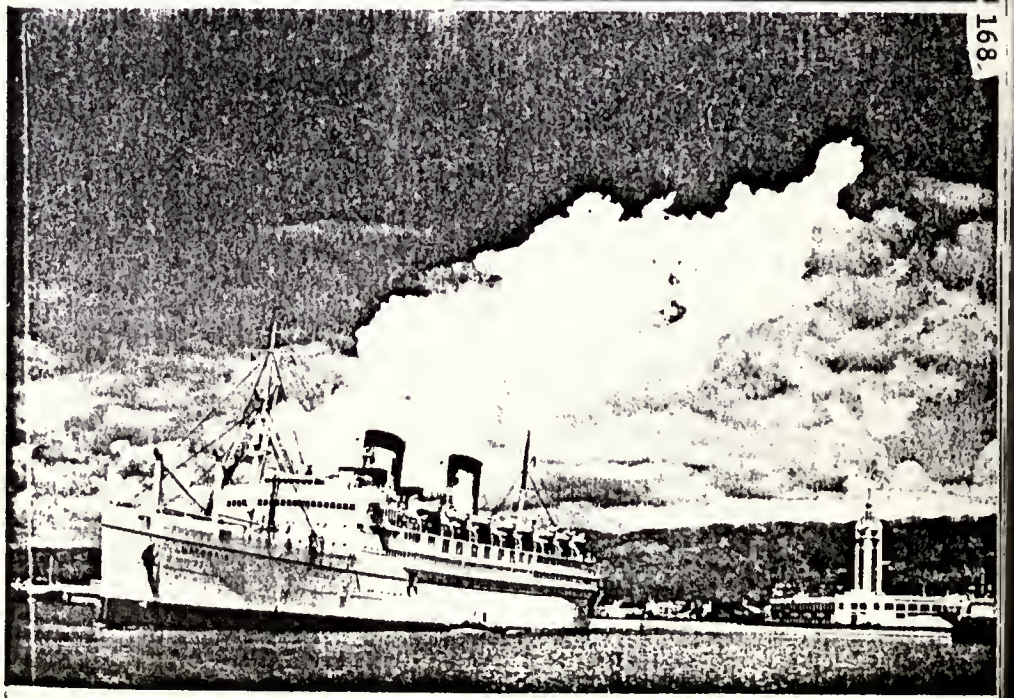
Captain Matson's last years were serene. His business was a success, he was happy at home, genuinely liked by his employees, an important figure in San Francisco. His last active day passed as he would have wished, in his office. In the late afternoon he went to the Pacific Union Club, where the chits he signed mark his courage and his stubborn refusal to give up. One is firm and clear; the next must have been written after the stroke, waveringly and weakly. But he went home alone and kept his mind clear until his beloved daughter could reach him.

Sitting in a "lanai suite" of William Matson's namesake ship it was inevitable to contrast its luxurious elegance with

the little boy running fast to escape the cat-o'-nine-tails and the young captain proudly commanding his coal barge. The *Matsonia* is the "hotel afloat" of the advertiser's dream; so like a hotel or a country club that one quite forgets the sea — at least on a calm passage. But even the stately *Matsonia* had a stormy youth, as I learned from the memoirs of her first captain, Peter Johnson. Built in 1927, she was the first merchant steamship built under specifications drafted after the *Titanic* disaster. She cost six and a half million dollars, had a capacity of 565 passengers, and was named the *Malolo,* "Flying Fish" in Hawaiian. Therein, according to some Hawaiians, lay her jinx, because a flying fish is famous for running away and anything named for so cowardly a creature would be sure to come to a bad end.

The *Malolo's* beginning seemed most auspicious; and Captain Peter Johnson, as the final honor of his career, was named to take her on her maiden voyage to Honolulu. When he looked her over he found her construction and workmanship the best he had ever seen. She was soon to prove her seaworthiness. They sailed from Philadelphia on a Monday morning. On Tuesday afternoon they were rammed by a Norwegian freighter. I quote from Captain Johnson's memoirs:

"The Malolo was rammed in the most vital spot, flooding the two fire rooms with over five thousand tons of water. No other ship afloat at that time could have survived. The bulkheads held. The ship kept an even keel but, steam and electricity being cut off, they had no way of cooking; but that night a Nantucket fishing trawler came alongside with food." Most of the *Malolo's* honored guests spent the night awake and worried; but Captain Johnson, sure of her worthiness, slept peacefully. Thursday at noon a tugboat arrived and towed them into New York harbor. What with wrangling among the insurance companies, the builders, and the Mat-



Captain Matson, and the *Matsonia* Docking near the Aloha Tower
[*photos, Pan Pacific Press*]

son people, it was October before the *Malolo* was ready for the sea again. Captain Johnson remarks that as the Matson men had plenty of time, they thought up many improvements, and when she slid down the ways for the second time, "we had a more completely constructed ship than if we had sailed from New York in May."

The *Malolo's* maiden voyage was worthy of the most luxurious passenger steamer in the Pacific. She carried government officials and Army and Navy officers; and in Honolulu her reception was — so Captain Johnson said — the grandest any ship ever received. Off shore she was met by a flotilla of outrigger canoes. Incongruous with the stately steamer and with the solid brick and stone city, nothing could have so well symbolized the welcome Hawaii has always given the outside world. Since the first little sailing ships dropped anchor in this bay, ships have been greeted by canoe-loads of flower-decked people singing and shouting: "*Aloha*," "Love to you." The *Malolo's* greeters were dressed like ancient Hawaiians in feathered cloaks and helmets and attended by hula girls. The tallest, stateliest actor, as Hawaii's great conqueror, Kamehameha, presented Captain Johnson with a roasted pig on a platter of koa wood. After due meed of speeches and dances, the captain blew a long blast to announce he was coming into port, which he did so gently that the canoes seemed to be leading the great steamer by leis of flowers as the old schooners were towed ashore by ropes.

That *Malolo* is now the *Matsonia*. Company officials will not admit that they yielded to a silly superstition. They say they changed her name because an older *Matsonia* had gone out of service. Maybe so. At any rate, I liked my ship, her history, and the men who operated her. Her captain was still Captain Johnson — a younger man, as old Captain Johnson died several years ago, but as devoted to his ship. When I

mentioned to him old Captain Johnson's boast that the *Malolo* was the finest steamer afloat he countered, quick as a flash: "She still is!" Then he laughed at himself, but would not hedge. "I don't say that just because she is my ship. She really is!"

In five days, to the appointed minute, Captain Johnson had brought the *Matsonia* over that invisible path across the Pacific from San Francisco to Honolulu. Cool San Francisco, with her rolling fogs and all her colors delicately gray, even blue shadows on green hills softly shaded. And Honolulu. Here too were hills near the sea, blue shadows on green swale, city buildings. But instead of chilling fog, cloud puffs like ostrich plumes rode a sparkling sky, the sea sparkled, everything sparkled; even the shadows had light, and every color took on a new and special hue.

MISS MATSON'S BETROTHAL FLASHED BY CABLE MILLIONAIRE FATHER'S OBJECTIONS STRANDED

Captain Matson's Thundered "No!" Gets Lost Somewhere and Couple Are Reunited

The announcement of the engagement of Miss Lurline Matson, the daughter of Captain William Matson of the Matson Navigation Company, and one of San Francisco's most charming society girls, to William Roth of Honolulu, was received by cable in this city yesterday.

Behind this message, which came from Captain and Mrs. Matson, who with their daughter, are in Honolulu, is as as pretty a romance as ever came to a happy conclusion in California, and last night the cables between this continent and Hawaii flashed congratulations to Miss Matson and her fiance.

The romance of the beautiful San Francisco girl and the young Honolulu man has led over rocky paths during the last year. It all but wrecked two lives. It careened over two continents and the island possessions. All this because a bluff sea veteran, master of ships and of millions, swore that his daughter should not marry a comparatively penniless youth just making his start in the world.

Reception Was Brief

About a year ago young Roth, a broker in Honolulu, came to San Francisco, walking on clouds and feeding on star dust. He had wooed and won Miss Lurline, and all that was left was to obtain the consent of her father. Ever since the time Roth called on Captain Matson in his office the wags of San Francisco's exclusive set have been relating the incidents of the reception and the subsequent ejection of the Honolulu suitor. The conference was brief and most painful to young Roth. The details were kept from Miss Matson, but she heard immediately about the results.

There was only one thing Captain Matson overlooked. He did not consider what effect the refusal would have on his daughter, the heiress to his millions. Miss Matson was overcome. She had been known for several years as athletic, an excellent horsewoman and a keen lover of out-of-door sports. Her health failed, and last fall Mrs. Matson took her heartbroken daughter to Europe, where they visited several fashionable resorts. Specialists were consulted, but the health of the young woman did not improve till about six weeks ago, when she and her mother received a message from Captain Matson telling them to come home, and he would apply a new treatment for his daughter's illness.

Cure Is Wonderful

After arriving in San Francisco about three weeks ago, Captian and Mrs. Matson and Miss Lurline--the latter now practically recovered from her strange malady--sailed on the new liner, Matsonia, to Honolulu. It was the Matsonia's maiden trip, and Miss Matson enjoyed every hour of the voyage.

She was quite herself when the Matsonia moored in Honolulu, and William Roth, again walking on clouds, met the steamer and the members of the Matson family.

Captain Matson smiled in spite of himself and slapped young Roth on the back. The wealthy ship owner admitted that he had been poor himself at one stage of his career, had even sailed before the mast.

San Francisco Examiner
February 15, 1914

From booklet: "Captain William Matson (1849-1917), From Handy Boy to Shipowner" by John E. Cushing--from a Newcomen Society lecture given by Mr. Cushing before the Coast Guard Academy at New London, Conn., October 4, 1949.

That man was Captain William Matson. Just 100 years ago, measured back from October 18th of this present Year 1949, in Lysekil, Sweden, a rugged little boy, a genuine *"forty-niner,"* was born. Both of his parents were killed accidentally when he was only a few years old, and, he, like many orphans, as he grew up, developed a sense of self-reliance.

His love was the Sea, and he used to spend his time out of school looking at the tall masts of the sailing ships, which came and went from his native shores.

One day—only 10 years old—he shipped as a handy boy on a sailing vessel, and a career, which was to write a chapter in the maritime history of America, was begun.

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His education was obtained as he went along. His promotions were earned under harsh conditions, at the hands of mates, who believed in stern measures. His interest was in ships sailing to far-away places; and one day he shipped, at the age of 14, on the *Aurora* which took him to New York. Stories of gold in California filled the minds of everyone he met, and there he joined a sailing ship, the *Bridgewater*, on a trip around the Horn, landing in San Francisco, a lusty, hustling town, still frontier, still resounding, though faintly, with the clamor of men hunting gold.

Now—he might have been diverted into the gold fields, but the Sea—the ships—were in his blood.

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The best job he could get was on a barge which plied San Francisco Bay, and it was while serving on barges and on the coal schooner, *William Frederick*, that he met, and liked the men connected with the Spreckels Sugar Refinery. They liked this rugged young Swede, too. By now he had become Master of a coal barge.

I did not know him intimately, but one day the chief of our watchman's department was cleaning out some old papers in his office on the San Francisco docks and he found a picture signed on the back "William Matson." It was the picture of a young man with wide-set eyes, a firm jaw, but the thing that impressed me

was a look of determination, utter fearlessness and frankness. We revived the picture, had it copied, and used it as a cover picture in the *Matsonews*, a company publication for employees. It was the only picture of him that many of those in the company ever had seen, and it impressed us.

Sugar—his friends at Spreckels refined it, and some of it came from Hawaii—in sailing ships. Another far-off place,—and William Matson shipped on a small sailing vessel trading with the Sandwich Islands—known to us *today* as Hawaii. In those days it was a kingdom, ruled by king Kalakaua, and there was a trade developing with the friendly natives, and the expanding colony of Americans who first came to the Islands in 1824.

He must have seen great possibilities, because it was not long before he was talking to his friends about the wonderful opportunity which existed in this trade between San Francisco and the Hawaiian Islands. By now he was just 21, and he was a Master Mariner.

William, now Captain Matson, went about raising money to acquire a ship. With his friends he raised the sum of $20,000 and built the *Emma Claudina*, a small schooner capable of carrying 300 tons.

It was customary in those days to build ships *on shares*—not to go about, selling stock in small amounts, but each man put up what he could afford, or desired to invest, taking a sixteenth or a thirty-second, and this practice continued with the ship which he later built.

It is interesting to note that many large holdings in present-day Matson Company started with these small investments. With some of his partners, a $1,000 was about all they could raise. Some of the descendants of these original investors sit on the Board of Directors of the company today.

When the ship, *Emma Claudina*, finally entered the trade, the problem of course was to get cargo—that is a problem all shipping men have today—getting enough cargo to keep American ships in service against the keen competition of foreign vessels operating at lower costs. The uneven struggle of the American ship with its cheaper operating foreign competitors is well exemplified in Bill Nye's story of the fight with his enemy. Nye published a newspaper in a little Western cow town, and had many an editorial battle with an editor across the street, who published—according to Nye—"what he fondly conceived to be a newspaper."

Nye, telling of the encounter credits himself with the victory, because, as he relates: "We met in the middle of the street, in mortal combat—I finally got underneath him and when I got my ear in his mouth, I knew I had him!"

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Captain Matson would make the outward voyage as Master, his ship loaded with merchandise for the Island merchants. He brought back coconuts, sugar, sandal wood, and railroad ties. There was much railroad building going on at that time in the West, and to fill up space, he had conceived the idea of having railway ties cut from native woods, which he could draw upon to complete his homeward cargo.

The trade prospered, and he began to dream about a *large* ship which would make it possible for him to carry all that was offered. Once again he went to his associates, who by now had unlimited confidence in him, and he raised money again, in sixteenths and thirty-seconds, to build what was to him a dream ship—the *Lurline*—a brig, with cargo capacity of 640 tons. He was able by that time to take 8/32nds as his share of the cost, and she cost $32,000! Some of my old-timer friends who sailed with him told me of his pride in this vessel. He was its Master, and he would walk about it, watching every sail, noting all its peculiarities and possibilities. Men who sailed with him found him a good man to work with, and his ship was a happy ship. He fed well and would many times reward an extra good job with a 20 dollar gold piece.

He and his crew worked day and night in port, loading and dis-

charging cargo. He also traded in merchandise, buying goods to fill up in either direction, taking a chance on his ability to dispose of it on arrival.

Captain Matson's field of endeavor was destined to lie between the Port of San Francisco and his beloved Hawaiian Islands; and, during his first few years trading, there must have been crystallizing that idea which was to develop into what we take for granted today—a regular, dependable service to and from the Islands, ample cargo space, and a schedule which shippers could plan for and rely on.

During these days, there were other sailing ships, belonging to the Planters Line, which were trading back and forth on a more or less regular schedule, but stopping principally at Honolulu. The Big Island—as Hawaiians fondly call the Island of Hawaii—was 200 miles *away* from Honolulu and there was no regular service. Hilo, the principal port, was a good harbor, and sugar grew luxuriantly along the lowlands, and on the Hamakua Coast, because of the heavy showers and abundant sunshine. The Big Island needed a steady service and a market. Spreckels had interests on the Big Island, so it was only natural for the Captain to fit his idea into the scheme of things, and thus assure himself of cargoes.

The population of the Hawaiian Islands, in those days, was a little more than fifty thousand; and sugar production was about 12,000 tons per year, but increasing steadily. The Treaty of Reciprocity of 1876 had admitted Hawaiian sugar free of duty, and Captain Matson obtained a contract to carry some of the sugar. The majority of it was carried by the other sailing ships which were established in the trade.

His first call in Hilo was on May 4th, 1882 in the *Emma Claudina*. The Brig *Lurline* made her first voyage in 1887; and, in 1891, Captain Matson took the first step toward building up a

strong fleet by acquiring the wooden bark *Harvester,* carrying ten passengers and a crew of thirteen men. Trade expanded, and he added additional ships to the fleet. They were all in the one-thousand ton class and he always tried to get fast ships. Each new one brought an over-supply of cargo space, setting a new level of trade for him to meet, but the momentum he generated in building up volume always overshot the mark, and carried him into the need for still another ship. More ships stimulated more trade, which in turn, demanded still more ships—so went the rhythm of progress in Matson facilities and in the trade to and from Hawaii.

One ship which he purchased, the *Roderick Dhu,* was the first sailing ship on the Pacific to be equipped with a regular cold storage plant for stores. Also, she was electrically lighted. Something of an innovation in those days—taken for granted today. The *Roderick Dhu* which he regarded as "the trimmest little ship I ever sailed" made the 2,090 mile voyage from San Francisco to Honolulu *in 9 days and 3 hours.* Almost as fast as some of the 10-knot First World War ships which followed after her. Later on, the present *Lurline,* covered the same mileage in 4½ *days* without stepping up to her full speed.

During the next half dozen years, two fundamental changes came about—steel ships—steam propelled, had been steadily gaining in ocean transportation. Progress had dealt a blow to romance. The proud, gallant, old sailing ships were on their way out, and progress was setting a new pattern for Matson's operation. He saw the need for the change—from sail to steam; and, once more, as in Kipling's immortal work—: Old Sir Anthony says:

Steel, and the first expansion, it paid, I tell you, it paid,
We came with our 9 knot freighters, and collared the long run trade.

To build new a steel steamship would cost a great sum. There were long conferences and much talk about the advantages of steel

versus iron—steam *versus* sail. Someone suggested an economical way out. It so happened that a Spanish steamship had been wrecked on the Atlantic Coast and under our laws it could be bought, and, if salvaged and rebuilt at a cost satisfactory to fill the legal requirements, it could be registered and operated as an American vessel.

Captain Matson's partners were advised of the proposition, and, when it came time to take action, he had their backing.

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The wrecked ship was put on the block at a public sale, and the stocky, determined man took his place among the bidders. There was stiff competition, as other steamship companies wanted that ship. Up and up went the price until it was past the point which he had authority to go, but here the character and courage of the man asserted itself. He called a higher price than the last bid and all around looked at him. They could read only one thing in his face. He was determined to have that ship. Bidding stopped and the ship was his.

She was salvaged, and went into the shipyard for rebuilding.

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It was his *first* steamship and she was named the *Enterprise* as a tribute to the people who had stood behind him. She finally was finished in 1902, and sailed around the Horn to take her place in the Hawaiian trade. She was 3,620 tons deadweight and she carried 22 passengers.

One of the old-timers told me about her arrival and said that the Captain stood on the dock watching the ship come alongside, full of expressions of pride, and he wondered if she would ever sail full of cargo. "We're going to have to work hard to get enough cargo to keep her full" was the way he put it. Today, loads of 12,000 tons in our modern *C-3* freighters are the usual thing.

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Meanwhile, Hawaii was undergoing changes—a new government, a Republic, sought admission to the Union as a State; but it was not until the Spanish-American War had demonstrated the value of Hawaii as a mid-Pacific base, that serious consideration

was given to her request. Negotiations were opened which finally led to annexation, in 1898, as *a Territory* of the United States.

The Island sugar industry doubled and trebled its output. With the increase in commerce between the Islands and the mainland, came a corresponding increase in passenger traffic. The regular business travel was being steadily augmented by tourists, enroute to Hawaii for sightseeing and pleasure.

Captain Matson noted this trend and built a second *Lurline*, a steamship, which carried fifty-one passengers, 8000 tons of cargo. Two years later, came the *Wilhelmina*—eleven bathrooms—accommodations for 146 passengers—appointments that "rivaled the finest on the Atlantic," to quote from the advertisements of the day. Also, the first motion picture show for passengers was given on the *Wilhelmina*.

Swiftly in the wake of the *Wilhelmina* came the *Manoa*, then the *Matsonia*, half again as large. Three years later, came the *Maui*, sister ship of the *Matsonia*—all built in American shipyards. These four, fast, modern ships made possible a regular weekly sailing to and from the Islands, and started the tourist industry of Hawaii which today closely rivals the two basic industries—sugar and pineapple.

The building of the second *Lurline* was a big undertaking. The steam ships which preceded her were made-overs and rebuilts, but here was a steel ship, which had to be planned from keel to truck. Captain Matson spent long hours over the plans, and when the contract was let to Newport News Shipyard, he was a frequent visitor, and his technical men were on the job day and night, watching to see that every specification was faithfully fulfilled—even down to the "last box of matches" as they said in the shipyard. When she was finished she made her way around the Horn and entered the service, in 1908. Her arrival in San Francisco was a red letter day. The President of the Chamber of Commerce commented solemnly, on the daring of the man who—"risked so much."

Now this very remarkable man, although his first interest was in ships, had become convinced that *oil* was the coming thing *for fuel,* in steamships, and for the industries on the Pacific Coast. He became interested in the oil fields around Coalinga, California, and formed a company to produce and transport oil. Later on, he organized the Honolulu Oil Company, now one of the large producers, owning properties in many States of the Union. The problem of getting oil to the Coast cheaply, fascinated him; also the rail rate by tank car was very high, so to overcome this, he constructed a pipe line, from Gaviota to his wells in the Buena Vista Hills. It was the first "large" pipe line, 4 inches to be exact; and it carried the oil to his terminals at tide water, where it was transferred to a fleet of barges, converted from old sailing vessels. Quite a contrast with the "Big Inch" lines which span half of our continent today.

He was the first to use oil as a fuel in the Pacific offshore trade when he converted his first steamship, the *Enterprise,* to burn oil. This sounds very simple today—but it required quite a bit of doing.

Oil was not too well-known in those days, and viscosities, flash points, and similar mysteries surrounded its use. It was regarded as hazardous, and there was official objection to its use because of the danger to ships and passengers from explosion.

Captain Matson persevered through many conferences with the old U. S. Steamboat Inspection Service, and permission finally and reluctantly was granted. People quite naturally are unaware of the long and difficult road which had to be travelled to succeed in getting such an idea accepted.

When the new *Lurline II* was built, she was fitted out with large bunker capacity, as he had in mind carrying excess bunkers for delivery to the plantations and other industries in the Hawaiian Islands. There was no indigenous fuel, and Australian *coal* was the principal source of power. The plantations relied largely upon *bagasse,* and upon this expensive *coal* for their power. Public

utilities also burned coal, and oil was a Godsend to them, because it was cheaper and in good supply. Oil was 20 cents per barrel at the wells, at one time.

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Of course, it should be said that the Captain had an eye to business, because he earned a good freight at so much per barrel delivered. But—he helped to reduce the cost of electricity and the cost of making sugar, to the extent that it was a good piece of business all around.

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Radio—today a ship without it would be considered a curiosity—if not unseaworthy. Yet someone had *to start it* and Captain Matson once again was the first on the Pacific. He installed an old spark set on the SS *Enterprise* and it was the talk of the industry. Other ships and other owners soon followed. He did it because he had been a ship master on long sailing ship voyages, out of touch with the world, except for an occasional speaking to a passing sailing ship. He knew the value of being in touch with his vessels, keeping track of their positions, and being able to tell his shippers when their cargo would arrive, thus removing the guesswork and the need for watches on the Hilltops to sound the cry of "Steamboat" when a ship was sighted.

Steam Turbines—we take them for granted. It is hard to realize that anyone should have questioned turbines as a means of propelling a ship, but here again—a fight between ideas and experience. Turbines would strip—you couldn't make repairs. Nothing as good as a good old reciprocating "up-and-downer." But the Captain persisted, and when the *Maui* was built she was the first ship on the Pacific to be equipped with high-powered geared turbines. She was a success from the start, and all Matson ships constructed after that were equipped with turbines. Their reliability and economy were proved many times over and the old Captain used to tease his opposition, saying: "See—I told you they would work."

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The *Maui, Matsonia,* and other ships were all peacefully engaged when we got into war, in 1917. They were requisitioned

and made outstanding records in transporting troops and material to Europe. Their large bunker capacity was an asset to our forces in the First World War and the ships, on several occasions, were used to refuel Navy vessels at sea. It is doubtful, of course, that the Captain foresaw such a possibility, but his ideas of how a ship should be built, and the uses to which she must be put, certainly contributed a great deal to our military undertakings.

In October of 1917, Captain Matson died. The ship which bore his name, the *Matsonia,* was in war service and he did not live to see the plaques bestowed upon his vessels by a grateful Government.

While the man passed away, his spirit continued to dominate the company, and the same progressive and daring policy which had been his, continued to inspire those who were left to carry on.

In 1921, two of the largest freighters ever built in American yards were constructed for the Hawaiian trade. Years later, these two 14,000-ton ships, with two smaller sisters practically kept the Islands in perishable food, running in fast convoys, during our war with Japan. They were built along the lines of the ships which he favored.

The fleet continued to grow in pace with the development of the Islands, and the Management always had in mind the idea which eternally guided Captain Matson's thinking. First World War cargo vessels were purchased, in numbers sufficient to provide ample space for all cargo offered, and to serve all of the Pacific ports. New features were added as needed to satisfy the shipper—refrigeration, molasses tanks, special lockers.

Meantime, the *pineapple industry* had been undergoing a remarkable growth, and demand for this delicious fruit was constantly increasing. From a small beginning of a few thousand cases, the pineapple pack now amounts annually, to about *20 million cases* of fruit and juice. Sugar production has increased to about 1,000,000 tons a year.

The company next placed some of its vessels on the route between the Islands and the Atlantic Coast *via Panama,* and, once more, brought to a reality another of Captain Matson's dreams, as he had always been a strong supporter of the building of the Panama Canal, pointing many times to the great saving in ship time for a vessel en route from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast.

Another of his dreams which he did not live to see come true was the building of the *Malolo,* 21-knot passenger ship, a luxury vessel in every respect, and really rivalling the finest appointments and accommodations on the Atlantic. The *Malolo* went into service in 1926, cutting the running time in half, and making it possible for visitors to Hawaii to make the round trip within the regulation *two-weeks* vacation.

The success of the *Malolo,* afterwards renamed the *Matsonia* in honor of Captain Matson, started the Management thinking of a running mate, and, in 1928, *Lurline III* was contracted for. Two other sister ships were built about the same time, for the Australian-New Zealand and South Seas trade, and these vessels, which called both ways at Honolulu, developed a substantial tourist trade from the lands *down under,* to the Hawaiian Islands.

When the present *Lurline, Monterey,* and *Mariposa* were built, certain U.S. Naval requirements were incorporated in their plans and construction. These ships were fast, 632 feet long, 18,017 gross tons, and had passenger space for 728. They had large bunker capacity, following the old Captain's ideas, which gave them a steaming radius of 18,450 miles at 21½ knots.

Down through the years, from the days of the little *Emma Claudina,* the ideas planted in the mind of Captain Matson had taken root, and here, on that night of December 9th, 1941, was a fleet of freighters, and four large, fast passenger ships, plus an organization, destined to play a big hand in the Second World War.

The *Lurline* was stripped of her luxury fittings, converted into a Troop Transport, and six days later, exhausted from long hours

of work and planning, we saw her off to Honolulu with the first replacements for the Navy and Marine Corps. A short time later, she was back and sailed, with the *Mariposa*, *Matsonia*, and *Monterey*, to garrison the Samoan Islands.

During their war service these four liners covered over 1,450,000 miles and carried 736,521 troops, civilian personnel, and large numbers of wounded and prisoners of war.

The *Lurline*, since the war, has been completely reconditioned into a beautiful, fireproof luxury liner, and has taken her place in the Hawaiian run.

The old freighters have all gone to their reward—replaced by a modern fleet of 18-knot *C-3* cargo liners, *C-2*, and *Liberty* ships equipped in every respect to cater to the requirements of the Island shippers. They are serving all Pacific, Atlantic, and Gulf ports, as well as South Seas, Australia, and New Zealand—strong—lusty descendants of the little *Emma Claudina*.

Captain Matson would be proud to see them, and it was fortunate that we had some ships available on that eventful day—*December 7, 1941*. It was fortunate that somewhere back in those years there was *a man* who had an idea—an idea that made it possible for us to have ships *when we need them*.

Kipling's Sir Anthony, while telling his son about his success in the shipping business, epitomizes the guiding thought in William Matson's life:

And they asked me how I did it, and I gave 'em the scripture text,

You keep your light so shining, a little in front o' the next!

THE END

"Actorum Memores simul affectamus Agenda!"

123 BELLA VISTA DRIVE
HILLSBOROUGH
CALIFORNIA 94010

September 8, 1980

MRS. WILLIAM P. ROTH

Member, Board of Directors of American Horse Show Association, New York.

Member, Board of Directors, U. S. Equestrian Team, Gladstone, New Jersey.

Member, Board of Directors of American Saddlebred Horse Association, Louisville, Kentucky.

Member, former Director of American Hackney Horse Society, Pittsfield, Illinois.

Member, Board of Directors of California Saddle Horse Breeders Association.

Member, American Quarter Horse Association.
Member, U. S. Trotting Association.

L.B.R.

CHIEF OF LONGVIEW

Perhaps the most fitting tribute to Chief of Longview would be to reproduce the speech of Charles W. Green, on the great stallion's retirement at Kansas City in 1932, in the same ring where he had won his laurels on his first appearance as a three-year old:

"You are about to witness one of the most dramatic events in horse show history. We are bidding farewell to one of Missouri's greatest sons. Here, in his own home town where he started his career in this arena, he is ending tonight the most spectacular show life of any horse of our time.

"Born at Longview Farm, just a few miles from this city, a breeding establishment owned by Mr. R. A. Long, one of the country's oldest supporters of the horse industry, and one who has produced some of the most famous horses of the last century. To him goes the honor of having produced one who is known as 'the greatest horse of all time,' Chief of Longview.

"This outstanding stallion just seven years ago electrified an audience, many of whom are here tonight, by not only winning the Junior stake as a three-year-old, but by breaking all records for his age by winning the final Grand Championship. One of his many records, unsurpassed.

"Immediately after that show, he was purchased by the late Mrs. William Matson, a keen judge and a real lover of horses, for her daughter, Mrs. William P. Roth.

"Leaving for his new home in California, he began a career which took him from the shores of the Pacific to those of the Atlantic; Los Angeles, San Francisco, St. Louis, Louisville, Chicago, Devon, Boston and New York are but a few of the cities in which he swept all before him. In our bordering state, Kentucky, he established an unbeaten record by winning the stallion championship four consecutive years, and the world's grand championship twice.

"A fitting tribute by our friendly rivals was paid him last month when Kentucky honored our Missouri son with a public demand for a farewell exhibition.

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"A fitting tribute by our friendly rivals was paid him last month when Kentucky honored our Missouri son with a public demand for a farewell exhibition.

"That he is the greatest horse of all time is an admitted fact. Apart from his ability as a performer, no horse ever entered the ring with such presence or such striking individuality. His personality, his unbounded courage and his masculine arrogance made him an outstanding figure in the finest company.

"Although only ten years old and physically fit for many more contests, he is being retired to the stud, having won all the laurels possible. His early retirement is just what might be expected from his owner, Mrs. Roth, whose genuine sportsmanship and real honest love of her horses has been a striking example to the horse show world.

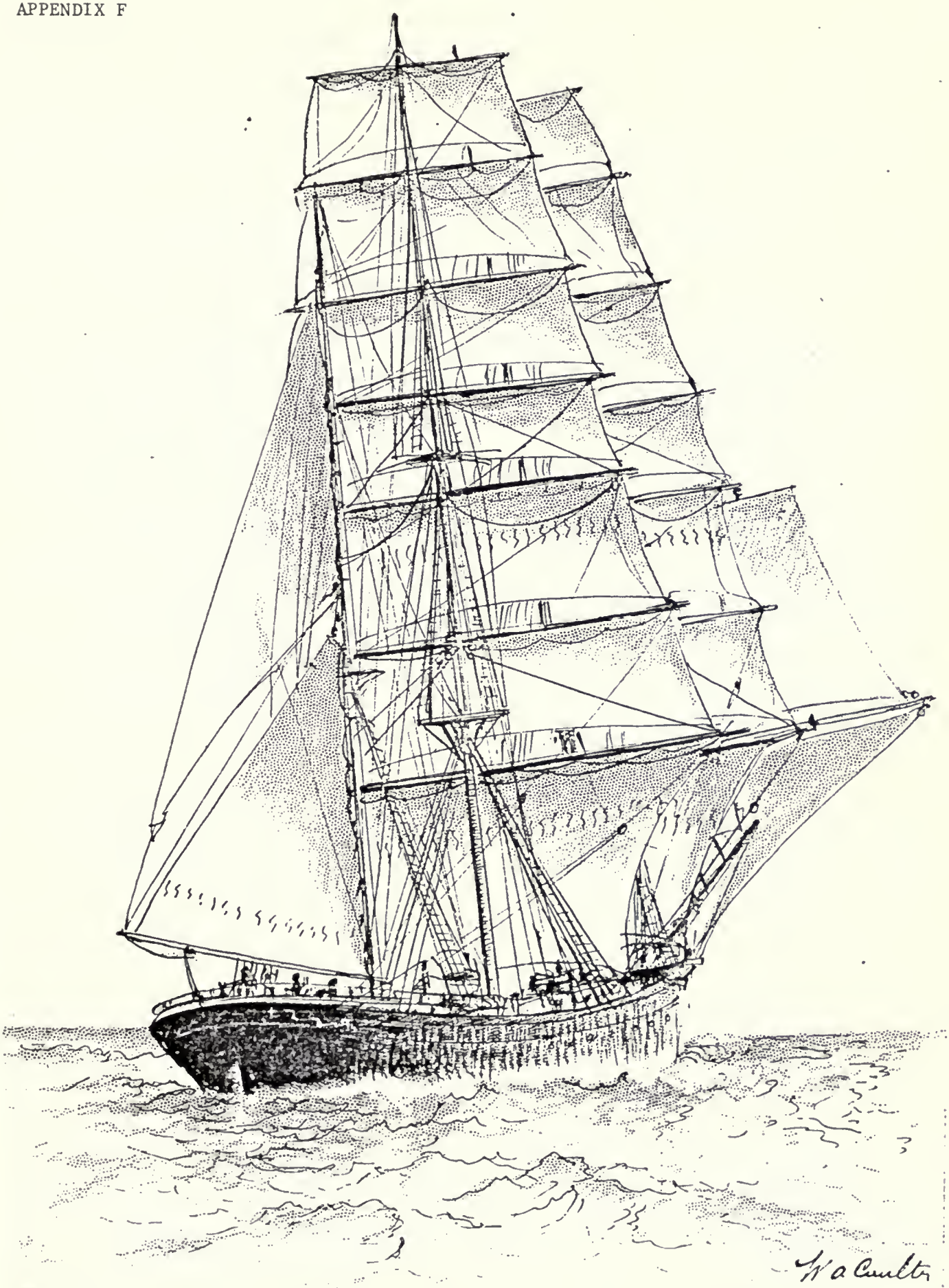
"It is doubtful whether any stallion has ever sired such a uniformly fine lot of colts and fillies. His youngsters have been sensational wherever they have been shown. It was an historic occasion last Monday night when Chief witnessed his own daughter, Crimson Rambler, win the same junior stake which he had won in his youth at this show. This again was a repetition of what happened in Kentucky a month ago and established another of Chief of Longview's remarkable achievements.

"Too much credit for Chief's victories cannot be given Lonnie Hayden, another son of Missouri, who made him and rode him through his victorious career. They have always been inseparable and always will be. When Chief left for California, nothing would satisfy him until Lonnie joined him.

"We shall now bid farewell to the 'Great Parader.' He ends his career among his own home folks. Those whom he loves and those who love him. Chief, though you may live in California—for us—you're a son of old Missou'."

To Mrs. Roth and those closely associated with Chief of Longview, the sympathy of the Saddle Horse world went out at Chief's untimely death, but there should be more than consolation, and a vivid joyous remembrance of one they loved, when around the show ring, as Chief of Longview's youngsters compete, they hear the reverent exclamations from a throng of horsemen ....."There is the old Chief, himself!"

APPENDIX F



RODERICK DHU -- drawing by W. A. Coulter.

BECOMES A FARMER

After fifty years at sea Captain Rock retired.

From the Hawaii Herald,
October 6, 1898, p. 2

Captain Charles Rock of the bark RODERICK DHU has decided to retire from the sea and turn farmer. For nearly 50 years he has been a sailor, and for 29 years he has sailed in and out of the Golden Gate as master of San Francisco owned vessels. He now thinks he is entitled to a rest ashore. Captain Rock's first command was the schooner EDWARD LEWIS, after which he was master of the FAIRY QUEEN and the bark EMMA AUGUSTA. Then he built and sailed the schooner MARTHA W. TUFT and from her went to the schooner PREMIER. Later he was master of the ships SUMATRA and DETROIT, and then made one of four who purchased the ship LEVI G. BURGESS. He commanded her for a time and then purchased into the bark HARVESTER. After that he was master of the ship DAISY KIMBALL and the bark ANNIE JOHNSON, and 3 years ago went into the fine steel bark, RODERICK DHU. When Captain Rock and others purchased the RODERICK DHUshe was a British ship, but he changed her rig and put her under the Hawaiian flag. Although he has taken to farming, Captain Rock will not turn his back altogether on the sea as he still retains his interests in at least a dozen vessels.

Captain Johnson of the bark SANTIAGO who succeeds Captain Rock on the RODERICK DHU, is one of the ablest of the present generation of ship masters. He was formerly mate of the brig LURLINE and then succeeded Captain Rock as master of the HARVESTER. From that vessel he was promoted to the bark SANTIAGO and now he commands the RODERICK DHU.

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sch.	*EDWARD LEWIS*	*47*	*tons*	*shp.*	*DETROIT*	*1494*	*tons*
sch.	*FAIRY QUEEN*	*832*	*"*	*shp.*	*LEVI G. BURGESS*	*1536*	*"*
bk	*EMMA AUGUSTA*	*285*	*"*	*bk.*	*HARVESTER*	*1428*	*"*
sch.	*MARTHA W. TUFT*	*173*	*"*	*s. s.*	*DAISY KIMBALL (st/schr., 1892)*		
sch.	*PREMIER*	*307. 69*	*"*	*bk.*	*ANNIE JOHNSON*	*947*	*"*
shp.	*SUMATRA*	*1, 015*	*"*	*bk.*	*RODERICK DHU*	*1642*	*"*

Captain Charles Rock

Interview of Rod C. Fischer, 158 Santa Clara Avenue, Oakland, Ca., by Roger Olmsted, 4 June 1957.

In the '70's Rock owned a scow schooner and on one slow trip down to S. F. during these years with a load of sand, the crew were as usual playing poker in the cabin. Rock got into an argument with the cook,** Wm. Matson, over a ten cent bet, and some harsh words passed between them, with the result that when they landed in S. F. Matson gathered his belongings together and left, despite the fact that Rock had repented. (He was like that, says Fischer.)*

*Matson found that he might command one of Spreckel's vessels trading to the Hawaiian Islands if he could raise the money to buy an interest in her.*** Lacking the cash, he returned to the scow and asked Rock to help him out. Rock put up $4,000. Rock continued to share in Matson's enterprises: he went into the oil business with Matson, was a director of Honolulu Oil: in later years he was port captain for Matson.*

Rock was born in Sweden, one of a large family (his father married three times). His real name was Sandberg, but after his arrival in the U.S.,

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* *An account in the Hawaii Herald, 10/6/98 gives Capt. Rock's first command as the schooner EDWARD LEWIS. Probably the vessel in this incident. The EDWARD LEWIS is listed at 47 tons in 1876 list of San Francisco schooners.*

** *Note on Matson as cook; cook on the scows was usually the last man aboard, and scow crews were frequently deep-water sailors on the beach; they regarded sailing in a "bay scow" as a change of pace and something of a lark. Thus, Matson's position in the Fischer yarn is not as unlikely as it sounds.*

*** *Note on Spreckels' vessel: most likely the three-mast schooner EMMA CLAUDINA, the first Spreckels vessel in which Matson owned an interest. Five years later Matson invested again with Spreckels, this time in the brigantine LURLINE. EMMA CLAUDINA was built in 1882.*

a Swedish friend convinced him that he should Anglicize his name to "Rock." He left school at 13 (c. 1854) and ran away to Germany. His family, which was well-to-do was upset, and his father followed him and brought him home. However, Rock ran away again the next year, and eventually wound up on the West Coast, in the "Sandwich Islands trade." In 1924, at the age of 83, he fell down the basement stairs and broke his neck, and died ten days later. (He had locked up the house, turned out all of the lights, then stepped through the wrong door in the dark.)

The RODERICK DHU was his last and favorite ship (Rod Fischer is named after her), and when he retired to the port captain's job he turned her over to Pete ("Dog-face") Johnson. Apparently he was associated with Matson in all of his later commands -- HARVESTER, RODERICK DHU, ANNIE JOHNSON. Fischer can recall Rock getting up late at night, hitching up the team, and driving over to the Matson oil tanks at Alameda Point (site of Todd shipyard) when a vessel was due in; there was little available in the way of navigational assistance, and it was helpful to have somebody ashore with a lantern.

On the tug Capt. Chas. Rock: Rock had no financial connection with Peterson, and the name of the tug was an attempt on the part of the latter to get the Matson towing business. (Fischer remembers that the incident was considered quite a joke in the Rock household.) The other Peterson boats were named PETERSON No. 1, PETERSON No. 5, etc.

Capt. Charles Rock, one of the parties who purchased the *Burgess* in 1887, had been sailing on the Pacific Coast as master some five years in the *Sumatra* and *Detroit*. In 1891 he sold his interest in the *Burgess* to Capt. John O. Youngren and subsequently bought into and commanded the barks *Harvester* and *Roderick Dhu*. Later he sailed for Capt. William Matson in the *Annie Johnson*, and on retiring, made his home in Alameda, Cal., where he died about 1926.

Capt. John O. Youngren, who bought Captain Rock's interest in the *Burgess*, commanded her for twelve years after which he had the bark *Santiago* in the San Francisco-Honolulu passenger and freight service for a short time. He then took command of the steamer *Enterprise*, engaged in the same trade, and served in her as master twenty-five years, a record as to time of service for a shipmaster in one vessel, and during all that time he never had an accident. The Captain retired from sea life in 1927 and now, at the age of seventy-three years, is in good health and living in San Francisco. In 1858, when ten years of age, he had come to this country in the ship *Fleetford*, immediately thereafter shipping as deck boy on the ship *Sumatra*, Capt. John Mullin, and continued in that vessel until Captain Mullin took command of the new ship *Paul Revere* in 1876. Captain Youngren staid with Captain Mullin and after making three voyages in the *Revere*, went from New York to San Francisco as boatswain of the ship *Eureka*. On arrival on the Pacific Coast he determined to remain there and after making a number of voyages in schooners, coastwise, and to Honolulu, bought into the *Burgess*. In that ship he was succeeded by his brother Capt. Jan O. Youngren, who had previously been master of the bark *Gatherer*. When the Burgess was sold to cannery interests, Capt. Jan O. Youngren was given command of the steamer *Hyades*, engaged in the Honolulu trade. During the World War he served in the transport service. He died in the Army Hospital at Livermore, Cal., in 1928 at the age of sixty years.

Account of ship LEVI G. BURGESS in F.C. Matthew's American Merchant Ships, 1850-1900, Series II, Salem 1931.

FALLS OF CLYDE

It must have been the third morning out of San Francisco, before dawn, with a strong northwest wind blowing out of a cloudless sky. The stars had faded, but in the east Venus, the Morning Star, glittered and sparkled. A moon past full still hung in the western sky. Deeply loaded, steering a southerly course, the old barkentine S.N. CASTLE was hurrying on, a high following sea boosting her speed on her road to the northeast trades and a destination in the Marquesas.

"As soon as you have drunk your coffee," the mate on watch said to me, "go aloft and loose the skysail. She can stand it...."

I climbed the hundred and thirty odd feet to the skysail yard, the highest sail in the ship. I cast off the gaskets and the sail billowed out in the strong wind. Down on deck my watchmate and the mate hoisted the yard to set the sail. I lingered for a moment.

It is always a great sight from up that high—water rushing along the ship's side, a school of porpoises gamboling ahead of the frothy bow wave, and the wide white wake behind. A couple of gooneys, the brown albatross of the North Pacific, were sailplaning forth and back across our track.

Before descending to the deck, I cast my eyes around the vast horizon. The sea was empty. Or so I first thought. But there where the sun was going to rise, there against those pink clouds, a sail was visible. Rapidly this sail—sails—raised themselves over the rim of the horizon until the whole ship stood revealed.

From the direction in which she was first seen, and the course she was steering, my shipmates knew her to be one of the Associated Oil Company's sailing tankers, either MARION CHILCOTT or FALLS OF CLYDE. The two of them regularly carried fuel oil in bulk from near Santa Barbara to Honolulu. As the minutes passed we could make out four masts instead of three and so knew this to be the FALLS OF CLYDE.

All sail was set; her cotton canvas gleamed white in the morning sun. We assembled aft, the captain and the mates, the watch on deck and the watch below, even the cook, just to admire her as she crossed our course astern. Her sleek brown hull was ornamented at the bow with a graceful figurehead, a lady in white, who with unseeing eyes gazed out over the path ahead.

The FALLS was on her best sailing point, making two knots to our one. She seemed to skim the tops off the whitecaps in that high northwest sea. Spindrift and spray rose over her weather rail to wet the lower sails and form miniature rainbows as it drifted off to lee. At times she rolled over toward us, showing her streaming decks and the water cascading off her fo'c's'lehead and rushing out of freeing ports and scuppers; she was deep laden and showing scant freeboard.

She dipped her flag thrice as a greeting and farewell, as was customary in ships of sail, and we hauled down our colors three times in reply. So the FALLS OF CLYDE passed on and was soon lost to sight. There was no time to be wasted in the age of wind-driven ships. Little did I know then, in 1909, a lad of nineteen, that in the years to come my life would be closely bound to this majestic beauty of the seas.

Fred K. Klebingat

A SPECIAL SECTION OF OCEANS, *VOLUME 5, NUMBER 5 (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1972)*
Prepared with the collaboration of Karl Kortum, Director, San Francisco Maritime Museum.

The things an old sailor does for his ship

By CAPTAIN FRED K. KLEBINGAT

FALLS OF CLYDE

There was many a shellback used to praise / Her turn of speed in the old-time days. (C. Fox-Smith)

WHENEVER sailing ship men meet on the Pacific coast and the subject of conversation turns to the days of sail, someone sooner or later will mention the FALLS OF CLYDE; he will speak with pleasure of the days when he sailed in her, and there is an affection, as if he spoke of an old friend. And well he may, she was a handy ship in a pleasant trade, good food and good pay, considering the times.

The FALLS OF CLYDE was built of iron as a four-masted ship in 1878 by Russell & Co. at Port Glasgow, Scotland, the first one of the Falls Line of Wright, Graham & Co. She was 1,748 net tons, with a length of 266 feet, beam of 40 feet, and a depth of 23 feet 5 inches. Most fittingly, she was named after the falls of that stream on whose bank she was built. Her early days were spent in the Calcutta trade. Although she was not lucky with her passages, she made herself an early name for speed. Captain C. Anderson, who commanded her under British flag, claimed that she was one of the fastest ships afloat.

In 1898 she was sold to Captain William Matson, the founder of the Matson Navigation Co. She hoisted Hawaiian colors, and when Hawaii became American territory she came under American registry. Captain Matson reduced her to a four-masted bark. Her jiggermast was lengthened by fitting a wooden extension to the heel of the mast, and of course new standing rigging was fitted. She carried single gallant and royals, a leg-o'-mutton spanker and ringtail topsail. On a long jib-boom she carried four headsails, she had no staysails between fore and main and main and mizzen (at the time I was chief mate in her at least), between jigger and mizzen she carried a jigger and also middle staysail. Under the Matson house flag she was commanded by Captain Charlie Matson, who was no relative of Captain William Matson, but who hailed from the same home town in Sweden. She ran regularly in the San Francisco-Hilo, Hawaii run, carrying passengers, general cargo, and livestock, returning to the coast with sugar.

FALLS OF CLYDE as ship, 1898 or earlier.

In 1907 the Matson Navigation Co. turned the sailing vessels FALLS OF CLYDE, MARION CHILCOTT ex KILBRANNON, MONTEREY ex CYPROMENE, SANTIAGO and RODERICK DHU over to the Associated Oil Co. of San Francisco, which converted them into tankers. MONTEREY, SANTIAGO and RODERICK DHU were rigged down to barges, but FALLS OF CLYDE and MARION CHILCOTT continued to run under sail.

It may be of interest to know how the FALLS OF CLYDE was fitted as a tanker. A fore-and-aft bulkhead was riveted in the midships to the height of her 'tween deck beams, which were plated with steel to about ten feet of either ship's side. Here a vertical bulkhead extended up to the main deck, which was covered with steel over the tanks, although the middle of the deck, below which in the 'tween decks there was room for dry cargo, was planked with wood. There were ten tanks, five on either side. The tank hatches were near the bulwarks, five to starboard and five to port. The forward bulkhead was about in the middle between the fore and main masts, while the after bulkhead was about ten feet ahead of the jiggermast. There were no cofferdams. Heavy steel struts braced the forward and after bulkheads to keelson and stringers. On the bottom of the tanks on either side there was an eight and a six inch pipeline, the larger for cargo and the smaller line for ballast. The reach rods of cargo and ballast valves extended to the inside of the tank hatches. An oil-fired Scotch boiler in the forward 'tween deck supplied steam to

This part originally appeared as the article "The 'Falls of Clyde'" by Captain F. Klebingat, in The Annual Dog Watch, *No. 14, 1957, published by the Shiplovers' Society of Victoria, for the Shiplovers' Societies of Australia. It is reproduced by courtesy of the Society, with editorial modifications by Karl Kortum.*

two double-acting cargo pumps in the forward hold, a steam winch driving the windlass, also the winch in the donkey house, and a 5 k.w. generator mounted in the fireroom. The boiler was fitted with a double stack, painted company colors, white with black top, and a black "A" on either side. Many a time one was asked if the ship was fitted with an auxiliary engine, as it looked that way. Her cargo capacity was 19,000 barrels, but we never loaded more than 17,500 barrels of fuel oil, besides which we carried about 1,200 steel drums of 100 gallons capacity, filled with gasoline, in the 'tween deck.

While under Associated Oil Co.'s ownership, the hull was painted brown with a red lead boot topping, masts were a kind of flesh color, houses white, lower bulwarks red, top of bulwarks white, steel decks black, waterways red lead. Her teak brightwork was always clean and oiled, and we did not forget to polish the brass. She was never stinted for gear; coils of rope and reels of wire were there, to be used when needed.

Captain Fred K. Klebingat was born near Kiel, Germany, in 1889. When young Fred decided on a seafaring career, his father got him a job in the Bremen full-rigged ship D.H. WATJEN. He rounded Cape Horn in the dread winter of 1905 when ice pushed unusually far north from the Antarctic and gales were at their worst. The well-handled WATJEN fared better than other ships; the saga of the BRITISH ISLES that year, with men injured, washed overboard, and losing limbs to frostbite was set forth by Captain H.S. Jones in the memorable book, *The Cape Horn Breed*. Fred Klebingat was in Pisagua, Chile, when the BRITISH ISLES limped in.

"I realized at an early date that there must be some seafaring going on where one did not have to round Cape Horn in the middle of the Southern winter. . . ." Captain Klebingat wrote in later years. He found it on the Pacific Coast in lumber schooners and barkentines and rose to command, although his first trip as captain was from Kobe to Manila in an exotic old Dutch bark, teak over iron ribs, with a cargo of empty gin bottles and carboys of acid on deck. "Reckless Ross" Millman, the first man to ride a motorcycle around the inside of a barrel, traveled as passenger this cycle and barrel were in the hold)—he had to get to Manila by carnival time. That was in 1918; in 1919 Captain Klebingat took command of the four-masted schooner MELROSE and continued in her until the mid-twenties; the MELROSE was the last regular South-seaman out of San Francisco, carrying lumber to Fiji and Tonga and returning with copra from Rotuma, Tonga, Niuafoo (Tin Can Island), and Niuatobutabu. The Captain subsequently spent many years as master of large schooner yachts in South Sea voyaging, commanded Liberty ships and tankers during World War II in both the Atlantic and Pacific, and, in 1969, at the age of eighty, skippered the motorship COOS BAY in the coastwise lumber trade.

which must have been a composite bark, in which he mostly engaged in the coastwise trade around Australia. Swan River, Cape Leeuwin, Hobart, Melbourne, and Adelaide he described to me, and though I was quite a stranger in Australian waters, I became rather familiar with them in these conversations—the tribulations of beating around the Leeuwin, the dangers of Bass Strait, and the stormy Tasman Sea.

His next command was the composite bark PAK WAN, owned in Newcastle, New South Wales. He seems to have engaged quite a bit in the South Sea trade, as he told me about visiting Tahiti, the Carolines, and New Guinea. In 1893 she was wrecked on Waikiki Beach at Honolulu. Seemingly the underwriters abandoned her, and Captain Smith salvaged her after buying the wreck, repaired her, and renamed her the MAUNA ALA. Her end came in 1903, stranding on Topolobampo Bar in the Gulf of California, and she became a total loss. As it was the fault of the Mexican pilot, Captain Smith gave his wife power of attorney and sent her to Mexico City to sue the Mexican Government, he meanwhile shipping as chief mate of the MARION CHILCOTT to supply the needed funds. She won the case. Some years later he was put in charge of the oil barge SANTIAGO, and again in 1913 Associated Oil put him in charge of the FALLS OF CLYDE. He continued as master of her even after she was sold to George W. McNear in about 1919, and made two voyages in her to Europe with oil. He resigned in 1921, just previous of her last trip under sail to Buenos Aires. On her return the ship was sold to the General Petroleum Co. of Los Angeles, and rigged down as a barge. I think Captain Smith died shortly after that.

The Associated Oil Co., and its general manager, Mr. Walter E. Buck, took great pride in the upkeep of their fleet, and especially of the FALLS OF CLYDE, but nobody could have been more proud of the looks of his command than the captain. He insisted that the mast trucks be finished in gold leaf; we not only had canvas bunt gaskets but they were lettered with the company monogram. The MARION CHILCOTT lost a skylight pane and replaced it with canvas; this would never do for Captain Smith. When the CLYDE had a similar accident, he would not rest until a piece of fancy etched glass with the original curve was fitted again in the skylight. In 1913 the FALLS OF CLYDE was fouled by an interisland steamer, which all but demolished the figurehead. Captain Smith badgered the company until he was ordered to replace it. E. B. Lovejoy, San Francisco's well-known ship carver, was commissioned to reproduce the figure and the two bas-reliefs showing the Clyde Falls which were mounted abaft the hem of the lady's skirt on either side. The rest of the trail board was not damaged. This, without doubt, was the last figurehead ever carved in San Francisco. The captain must have suspected me of having some artistic ability, as it was not long after I joined the ship that he asked me if I would be able to paint the bas-reliefs of the Clyde Falls in natural colors and gold-leaf the lady's necklace and the hem of her skirt. In consequence, many hours at sea were spent on a stage over the bow, dolling up the figurehead so that it would come up to the Old Man's expectations.

Captain Smith was one of the best seamen I have been shipmate with; his weather predictions were mostly uncannily accurate. His lessons about handling sailing vessels in hurricanes stood me in good stead many a time.

Although the Old Man had been away from Scotland donkey's years, he never lost his Scottish brogue, and he used to roll his R's and at times he would insert this letter where none belonged. Referring to a sailmaker's palm, he would say: "Get yorr par-r-rm." He would frequently refer to the ship as "The gir-r-rul with the eyr-run fez," or that is the way

Chief Mate Klebingat and Captain Smith taking noon sight under the spanker boom.

Adermann

By CAPTAIN FRED K. KLEBINGAT

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There was many a shellback used to praise / Her turn of speed in the old-time days. (C. Fox-Smith)

WHENEVER sailing ship men meet on the Pacific coast and the subject of conversation turns to the days of sail, someone sooner or later will mention the FALLS OF CLYDE; he will speak with pleasure of the days when he sailed in her, and there is an affection, as if he spoke of an old friend. And well he may, she was a handy ship in a pleasant trade, good food and good pay, considering the times.

The FALLS OF CLYDE was built of iron as a four-masted ship in 1878 by Russell & Co. at Port Glasgow, Scotland, the first one of the Falls Line of Wright, Graham & Co. She was 1,748 net tons, with a length of 266 feet, beam of 40 feet, and a depth of 23 feet 5 inches. Most fittingly, she was named after the falls of that stream on whose bank she was built. Her early days were spent in the Calcutta trade. Although she was not lucky with her passages, she made herself an early name for speed. Captain C. Anderson, who commanded her under British flag, claimed that she was one of the fastest ships afloat.

In 1898 she was sold to Captain William Matson, the founder of the Matson Navigation Co. She hoisted Hawaiian colors, and when Hawaii became American territory she came under American registry. Captain Matson reduced her to a four-masted bark. Her jiggermast was lengthened by fitting a wooden extension to the heel of the mast, and of course new standing rigging was fitted. She carried single gallant and royals, a leg-o'-mutton spanker and ringtail topsail. On a long jib-boom she carried four headsails, she had no staysails between fore and main and main and mizzen (at the time I was chief mate in her at least), between jigger and mizzen she carried a jigger and also middle staysail. Under the Matson house flag she was commanded by Captain Charlie Matson, who was no relative of Captain William Matson, but who hailed from the same home town in Sweden. She ran regularly in the San Francisco-Hilo, Hawaii run, carrying passengers, general cargo, and livestock, returning to the coast with sugar.

FALLS OF CLYDE as ship, 1898 or earlier.

In 1907 the Matson Navigation Co. turned the sailing vessels FALLS OF CLYDE, MARION CHILCOTT ex KILBRANNON, MONTEREY ex CYPROMENE, SANTIAGO and RODERICK DHU over to the Associated Oil Co. of San Francisco, which converted them into tankers. MONTEREY, SANTIAGO and RODERICK DHU were rigged down to barges, but FALLS OF CLYDE and MARION CHILCOTT continued to run under sail.

It may be of interest to know how the FALLS OF CLYDE was fitted as a tanker. A fore-and-aft bulkhead was riveted in the midships to the height of her 'tween deck beams, which were plated with steel to about ten feet of either ship's side. Here a vertical bulkhead extended up to the main deck, which was covered with steel over the tanks, although the middle of the deck, below which in the 'tween decks there was room for dry cargo, was planked with wood. There were ten tanks, five on either side. The tank hatches were near the bulwarks, five to starboard and five to port. The forward bulkhead was about in the middle between the fore and main masts, while the after bulkhead was about ten feet ahead of the jiggermast. There were no cofferdams. Heavy steel struts braced the forward and after bulkheads to keelson and stringers. On the bottom of the tanks on either side there was an eight and a six inch pipeline, the larger for cargo and the smaller line for ballast. The reach rods of cargo and ballast valves extended to the inside of the tank hatches. An oil-fired Scotch boiler in the forward 'tween deck supplied steam to

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two double-acting cargo pumps in the forward hold, a steam winch driving the windlass, also the winch in the donkey house, and a 5 k.w. generator mounted in the fireroom. The boiler was fitted with a double stack, painted company colors, white with black top, and a black "A" on either side. Many a time one was asked if the ship was fitted with an auxiliary engine, as it looked that way. Her cargo capacity was 19,000 barrels, but we never loaded more than 17,500 barrels of fuel oil, besides which we carried about 1,200 steel drums of 100 gallons capacity, filled with gasoline, in the 'tween deck.

While under Associated Oil Co.'s ownership, the hull was painted brown with a red lead boot topping, masts were a kind of flesh color, houses white, lower bulwarks red, top of bulwarks white, steel decks black, waterways red lead. Her teak brightwork was always clean and oiled, and we did not forget to polish the brass. She was never stinted for gear; coils of rope and reels of wire were there, to be used when needed.

For many years the FALLS OF CLYDE and her running mate MARION CHILCOTT came to San Francisco only to refit. They loaded oil at an outside port near Santa Barbara, California, called Gaviota, quite safe in summertime, although even in winter the ships managed to hold on, as it was somewhat sheltered by dense kelp beds. They loaded always for Honolulu, returning in ballast. No tugs were required, they sailed up to the wharf or made sail to the prevailing westerly winds. When I joined the CLYDE as chief mate early in 1916 the run was changed; she then traded regularly to San Francisco, loading fuel oil and gasoline in drums for Honolulu, and returning with molasses.

So much for the ship, and now I must tell you about her commander, when I was in her. Captain William Smith was a native of Peterhead, Scotland. When I joined the ship he must have been about 60 years of age. An old-time sailing ship master, he had his first command, the composite bark FLODDEN, when he was 23 years old. Anchoring at Woosung Bar [Shanghai], she was caught in a typhoon. The masts were cut to prevent her from dragging. In spite of this she stranded. Captain Smith and his chief mate were captured by Chinese pirates and held for ransom, to be later rescued by H.M.S. KESTREL. His next command was a vessel of which he told me but little, the PLADDA, probably sailing the China coast. Then came the ALBYN'S [illegible] OF CLYDE which must have been a composite bark, in which he mostly engaged in the coastwise trade around Australia. Swan River, Cape Leeuwin, Hobart, Melbourne, and Adelaide he described to me, and though I was quite a stranger in Australian waters, I became rather familiar with them in these conversations—the tribulations of beating around the Leeuwin, the dangers of Bass Strait, and the stormy Tasman Sea.

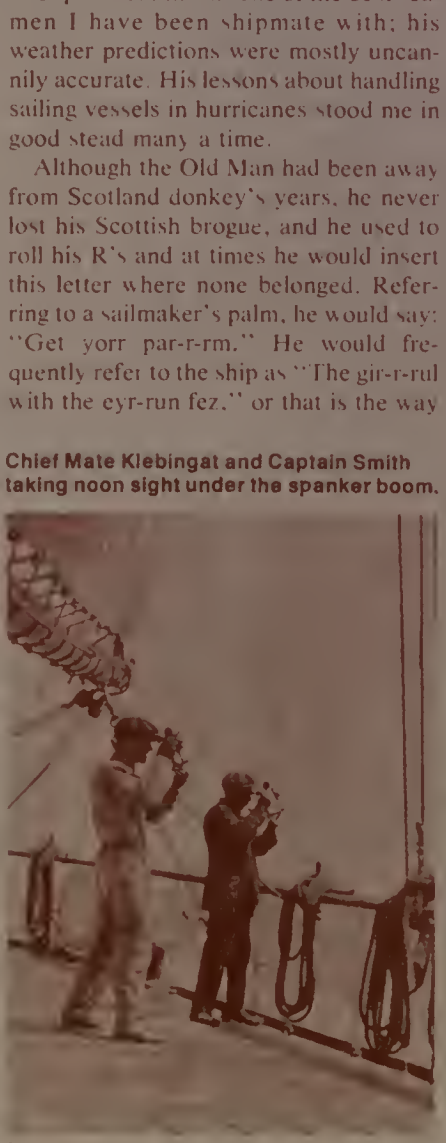
His next command was the composite bark PAK WAN, owned in Newcastle, New South Wales. He seems to have engaged quite a bit in the South Sea trade, as he told me about visiting Tahiti, the Carolines, and New Guinea. In 1893 she was wrecked on Waikiki Beach at Honolulu. Seemingly the underwriters abandoned her, and Captain Smith salvaged her after buying the wreck, repaired her, and renamed her the MAUNA ALA. Her end came in 1903, stranding on Topolobampo Bar in the Gulf of California, and she became a total loss. As it was the fault of the Mexican pilot, Captain Smith gave his wife power of attorney and sent her to Mexico City to sue the Mexican Government, he meanwhile shipping as chief mate of the MARION CHILCOTT to supply the needed funds. She won the case. Some years later he was put in charge of the oil barge SANTIAGO, and again in 1913 Associated Oil put him in charge of the FALLS OF CLYDE. He continued as master of her even after she was sold to George W. McNear in about 1919, and made two voyages in her to Europe with oil. He resigned in 1921, just previous of her last trip under sail to Buenos Aires. On her return the ship was sold to the General Petroleum Co. of Los Angeles, and rigged down as a barge. I think Captain Smith died shortly after that.

The Associated Oil Co., and its general manager, Mr. Walter E. Buck, took great pride in the upkeep of their fleet, and especially of the FALLS OF CLYDE, but nobody could have been more proud of the looks of his command than the captain. He insisted that the mast trucks be finished in gold leaf; we not only had canvas hunt gaskets but they were lettered with the company monogram. The MARION CHILCOTT lost a skylight pane and replaced it with canvas; this would never do for Captain Smith. When the CLYDE had a similar accident, he would not rest until a piece of fancy etched glass with the original curve was fitted again in the skylight. In 1913 the FALLS OF CLYDE was fouled by an interisland steamer, which all but demolished the figurehead. Captain Smith badgered the company until he was ordered to replace it. E. B. Lovejoy, San Francisco's well-known ship carver, was commissioned to reproduce the figure and the two bas-reliefs showing the Clyde Falls which were mounted abaft the hem of the lady's skirt on either side. The rest of the trail board was not damaged. This, without doubt, was the last figurehead ever carved in San Francisco. The captain must have suspected me of having some artistic ability, as it was not long after I joined the ship that he asked me if I would be able to paint the bas-reliefs of the Clyde Falls in natural colors and gold-leaf the lady's necklace and the hem of her skirt. In consequence, many hours at sea were spent on a stage over the bow, dolling up the figurehead so that it would come up to the Old Man's expectations.

Captain Smith was one of the best seamen I have been shipmate with; his weather predictions were mostly uncannily accurate. His lessons about handling sailing vessels in hurricanes stood me in good stead many a time.

Although the Old Man had been away from Scotland donkey's years, he never lost his Scottish brogue, and he used to roll his R's and at times he would insert this letter where none belonged. Referring to a sailmaker's palm, he would say: "Get yorr par-r-rm." He would frequently refer to the ship as "The gir-r-rul with the eyr-run fez," or that is the way

Chief Mate Klebingat and Captain Smith taking noon sight under the spanker boom.



Adermann

it sounded. Sometimes, when we were bothered with a more than average amount of head winds, he would blame the ship for it; he would call her the most uncomplimentary names in the Scottish dialect—"You would br-reak the hear-r-t of an eyr-run hor-r-rse," he would say. Or if particularly exasperated: "She's a who-o-or that has lost her profession." But then he would tell the ship consolingly, "... but ye're a good gir-r-rul just the same." However, when the wind was fair and the CLYDE was going fourteen knots or more, Captain Smith was more cheerful. He would stand at the weather rail, pat it, and say, "Be good, little gir-r-rul, there is another mile left in you."

Captain Smith was a strong Presbyterian, but like many others bred in Scotland he needed at times some liquid stimulant—not the usual Highland Dew, however; no, his brand was "Old Taylor Yellow Label," an American variety of the same thing. At such times he used to talk to me about the evils of drink in others, especially the men before the mast—not that I could see that they were addicted to excessive drinking, in fact, I considered them to be rather on the sober side. In Honolulu I never saw much of the Old Man, he being ashore before the ship was properly secured, and he would show up with the tug on leaving; but at San Francisco, when a little stimulated with his favorite beverage, he would "hard time" the chief mate if he could. I never saw him carrying any seastock, and never saw him stagger or unable to sign his "WILLIAM SMITH, Master," with an easy flowing hand.

It is hard to say what made the Old Man leave the ship. It must have been his health, he always looked somewhat frail, hands and feet rather crippled by a long siege of rheumatism.

She was a handy ship, the mate and one watch could make her do their bidding, at no time did we ever call all hands. While in the Hawaii trade she carried master, two mates, pumpman, carpenter,

Crew on the jib-boom, FALLS OF CLYDE.

Fred Klebingat, as chief mate of FALLS OF CLYDE in 1916-17, makes his morning rounds. He looks aloft to see what attention the complex web of sails and rigging will need this particular day—always the chief mate's first concern at sea in a sailing ship. When the CLYDE was a sailing tanker and loaded, he recalls, "There was always water on deck, therefore I mostly went barefoot."

Adermann

FALLS OF CLYDE deep-laden with oil, in Monterey Bay, 1917.

cook, cabin boy, and ten A.B.'s. In the Atlantic she carried sixteen men before the mast. She handled like a boat, the mate and his five men on watch would have no trouble going about, but of course they had to step lively. Only beating in close quarters we would have steam up and haul the yards around with steam, and if it was night we used the electric decklights to make work easy.

When I was in her, the best day's run was 327 miles—that was running eastward. She had 11 days from Honolulu to San Francisco, and the days, of course, were less than 24 hours. Her best sailing point was with the wind on her beam. She travelled 12 knots very easily, and I have seen her logging 14 and over many a time. In the two years I was in the vessel I never saw a ship which could keep up with her.

After General Petroleum Co. rigged the old ship down as a barge, she spent the next 35 years serving as a floating filling station in Ketchikan, Alaska. Securely moored to their dock, she goes up and down with the tides, a convenient platform for servicing fishing boats in need of fuel. Gone are her masts and bowsprit, her figurehead is now in a Seattle museum, but, I believe, there is not much change in her hull. Although I have never seen the ship since I left her, I share the view of that Pittsburgh firm advertising iron pipe and its virtues: it showed a sketch of the old ship as she is now, praising the quality of the iron in her hull, and it said: "You can rig her up again and she would be as fit and seaworthy as ever." Yes, that is so, but as C. Fox-Smith wrote:

Where were her men that served her well,
Kept her watches and struck her bell,
Learned and humoured her every whim
Conned and steered her and watched her trim
Scoured and painted and kept her fine,
Her decks agleam and her yards ashine?
What of her sisters swift and tall?
Time and the sea had claimed them all.

A photograph that became famous: Hans Henrik Andersen at the wheel of FALLS OF CLYDE, taken by able seaman Ernest Adermann and often reproduced.

How my old friend, the FALLS OF CLYDE, was saved...

by Captain Fred K. Klebingat
August 1972

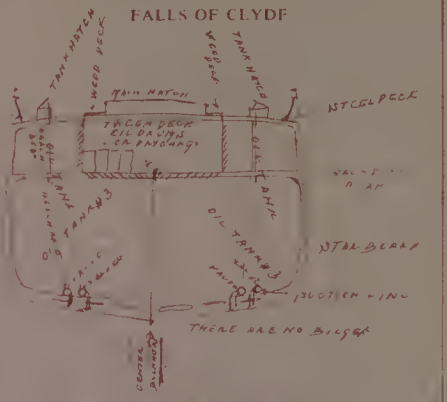
THE STORY of her rebirth began in 1959 when the ship arrived in Seattle in tow. The General Petroleum Company, now Mobil Oil, had no further use for her as an oil barge in Alaska. William Mitchell, owner of a machine shop at Ketchikan, bought the ship. He bought her on "spec," but one of the thoughts at the back of his mind was that she might become a museum ship.

Over the years I had never lost contact with the FALLS OF CLYDE, although more than forty years had gone by since I was chief mate aboard. So when I read she had been towed to Seattle and moored in Lake Washington, I made it my business to fly to Seattle to look over and visit my old friend. All by myself I wandered about her stout hull. I opened one of her tank hatches and was astounded. Little deterioration showed, so little in fact that I thought (of course, I knew different) that those Scotch workmen who built this hull had packed up their tools but yesterday. The hull had been well taken care of and in the cabin she looked as if my former commander, Captain William Smith, had left the day before. I had the feeling that from the day her keel was laid her builders and the multitude who had manned her all took pride in and loved this stout old hull.

On my return to San Francisco, I told Karl Kortum, Director of the Maritime Museum, about my observations aboard the FALLS OF CLYDE. Karl had spearheaded the restoration of the three-masted full-rigged ship BALCLUTHA five years before and this vessel had become a successful and beloved feature of the San Francisco waterfront.

"Well, let's find somebody to rig the CLYDE up again," Karl said, "and while we're at it let's see she is rigged as a four-masted ship, the way she looked when she left the River Clyde. We'll have to find her a home . . ."

Back in 1949, when Karl was just starting the historic ship preservation program in San Francisco, he got in touch with the marine superintendent of Socony-Vacuum about the FALLS OF CLYDE, but the company felt there was long life yet in the old hull up in Alaska and they were not particularly interested in disposing of



Captain Klebingat's sketch of tank arrangement for FALLS OF CLYDE.

her San Francisco turned to the BALCLUTHA instead, an easier proposition because the masts and yards were intact. When BALCLUTHA was put on display and proved such a popular success I wrote to Karl that we should keep our eye on the FALLS OF CLYDE for similar use.

Now that I had walked her decks again, I had a feeling of urgency.

I quote from a memo that Karl Kortum wrote in 1963 on what happened next: *The* CLYDE *would have made a good log barge, pulp barge or, being internally reinforced with tanks, would make a better than average breakwater for a log boom on the inboard side of Vancouver Island. That's where many a sailing ship wound up–a temporary usage, because the winter gales sweeping up the Strait of Georgia soon broke them into pieces. Chapman & Flint's* ST. PAUL *was so disposed of at Oyster Bay: the poor old wooden down-easter lasted only a few seasons. This was in the early 1940's. Two Crown Zellerbach pulp barges–one the former British full-rigged ship* RIVERSDALE, *and the other the four-mast bark* COMET *of London, latterly the* JAMES DOLLAR–*have been scuttled against the island within the past two years [in 1961 and 1963, respectively] to facilitate the herding of logs. Neither of these hulls had the internal strengthening of the* FALLS OF CLYDE: *the* CLYDE *could be expected to last somewhat longer in the living-death role of breakwater.*

Well, something had to be done, and fast. ("Fast" turned out to mean four years.) The ship arrived in Seattle in January of 1959, and before the month was out, I suggested to the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce, who had written for suggestions about how to start a maritime museum, that they save the FALLS OF CLYDE *instead. So Los Angeles was the first try. (There was a flurry of interest in Seattle in March, but nothing came of it.) A chap by the name of Ferguson in the Junior Chamber in Los Angeles liked the idea, seemed to be a good mover, and it went along for a while. Then Ferguson was transferred back East by his firm. The* CLYDE *for Los Angeles began to falter. Correspondence flew back and forth, and I went down and gave a speech to the Junior Chamber. Two people showed up.* FALLS OF CLYDE *was dead in Los Angeles by the end of the year.*

On the day that it died, I picked up the phone and called the Executive Secretary of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce. Whoever that might be. Bill Olesen of San Pedro had sent me a clipping from the Long Beach Independent, *dated September 11, with a proposal to the City Planning Commission to "Bring back to Long Beach the old four-masted ship* PACIFIC QUEEN, *formerly berthed here for years." Well, the* PACIFIC QUEEN *(which Long Beach had run out of town in 1952 in penultimate misunderstanding between the carnival man who owned her then and the Harbor Commission) had been transformed into our* BALCLUTHA *four years before, and had taken in from admissions a shade under $400,000 in that length of time. She wasn't for sale. My pitch to the Chamber was that* FALLS OF CLYDE *could be a* BALCLUTHA *for their waterfront if they moved fast and bought the old hull before she was scrapped or barged.*

Thus began the long, slow waltz with Long Beach. Fred Klebingat, former chief mate of the FALLS OF CLYDE, *had begun writing me urging the ship's preservation in 1955, and he now joined the marine artist Bob Weinstein and myself in the frustrating love affair with this southern city. It went on and on. The months turned into years. The typewriter clacked, the phone calls mounted. The correspondence file grew three inches thick. The* FALLS OF CLYDE *still tugged at her moorings up at Seattle.*

Long Beach is blessed with incredible wealth for this sort of thing springing out of the caverns filled with oil right under the city (they were now formally proposing both a maritime museum and a world's fair). But for all that, something was missing–I would say that the community just did not understand *the* FALLS OF CLYDE. *I tried to spur them and at the same time salvage the ship from sudden death status by telling other cities about her...letters to Vancouver, to Oakland, to Portland, to San Pedro, to Astoria . . . the pile grew thicker. (Rolf Klep in Astoria had an option on her for five days, but there is no oil under Astoria, and he bought a lightship for the Columbia River Maritime Museum instead.)*

The Long Beach FALLS OF CLYDE *effort finally collapsed in May of this year [1963]. The high point, I suppose, had been when $1,500 in option money was put down on the ship: $500 from Fred Klebingat of San Pedro, $1,000 from Bill Roth (Captain Matson's grandson) of San Francisco, the deal put together by prodigies of effort on the part of Bob Weinstein of Los Angeles. But the option was allowed to expire. That was in 1960.*

Mitchell, the machine-shop man from Ketchikan, had been inordinately patient during these years of effort. But the ship had run up a big moorage bill, and had the towage bill from Alaska against her, too. By late spring of 1963, Mitchell had to sell to someone, or suffer foreclosure from either the bank in Alaska or the towing company in Seattle.

At this juncture I was writing to the least likely prospects–a yacht broker from San Diego phoned about a ferryboat; I told him about the FALLS OF CLYDE. *A speculator who wanted to start up a coastwise excursion boat came in; he had the backing of unrevealed contractors in Contra Costa County–I told him about the* FALLS OF CLYDE *(headaches, but fewer than in the passenger-at-sea business). This gent was memorable for his phrase "a piece of the action" to describe whatever shares he might arrange to hold in the iron East Indiaman. The city of Lahaina* [on the island of Maui] *had long toyed with the idea of a restored whaling ship–a letter came in from Rear Admiral Richard Black. I suggested instead the* FALLS OF CLYDE. *I sent a signal to Harold Huycke* [the well-known maritime historian] *that the ship looked like being in trouble.*

All the letters, all the telephone calls for four long years had only one hope in mind–finding the man (or combination of men) who would see what the FALLS OF CLYDE *had been and what she could be again. The right spark in the right community.*

The man at the end of the rainbow was John Wright, a publicist and historian for the Dillingham Corporation in Honolulu. He had been a casual correspondent of ours for some years on maritime historical matters to do with the Hawaiian

Islands. On May 14 he put a letter in the mail on quite a different matter than the FALLS OF CLYDE, *a gaunt old hulk with which he was on that date not acquainted....*

On the same day a letter from a disappointed committee chairman in Southern California went north to Mitchell in Ketchikan, "...I can unofficially gain no support for purchase of the FALLS OF CLYDE *from you. Therefore, I did not want to hold up any further deals that you may have pending. In talking to Bob Weinstein, however, he has told me that Mr. Kortum has expressed real interest in the ship and quite possibly has something cooking. You will probably hear from him shortly regarding this interest. Thanks again for keeping the* FALLS OF CLYDE *offer open...."*

The other letter–the one that traveled from west to east, from Hawaii to the mainland–concerned a Coulter painting coming up for auction in the Islands.

Now, Captain Klebingat had suggested Honolulu as a proper setting for FALLS OF CLYDE *when I began my rounds back in 1959, and I had written letters in February and March of that year to Henry Kaiser, who had a development going there, and to Warren Roll, a newspaper photographer from San Rafael, who had gone down to work on the* Honolulu Star-Bulletin. *Nothing came of either of these efforts, although Roll strongly felt that at least a conventional maritime museum should be established in Hawaii. As mentioned above, a letter to Lahaina had gone off in May of this year, so the answer I made to Wright was the fourth try for the* FALLS OF CLYDE *in the Islands. Actually, the fifth, because Captain Adrian Raynaud of Seattle was in Honolulu in the fall of 1962, and he got a story about the ship into the* Star-Bulletin. *Like all the tries before Wright, this came to nothing.*

The painting by the celebrated San Francisco marine artist W. A. Coulter that Wright had written about portrayed a full-rigged ship beating off a lee shore. There was symbolism in that, because the letter he got back (thanking him, incidentally, for the tip on the Coulter) portrayed a real ship from Hawaiian history in circumstances just as perilous. This was May; in June a ship called the* FALLS OF CLYDE, *which Hawaii should remember fondly, was going to be sunk as a breakwater in Canada.*

Wright moved at the pace of a hurrying tropical storm. There was no waste motion, and his moves were all the right ones. He popped word of the ship's existence and jeopardy in the Sunday, May 19 Star-Bulletin & Advertiser. *He wrote a letter to the Governor. He made contact with Matson. He wrote for more ammunition.*

Karl had found a sound new friend for the FALLS OF CLYDE. Wright interested Dr. Roland Force, Director of the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, and Bob Krauss, columnist for the *Honolulu Advertiser*. Krauss began a rollicking, bang-up campaign for the ship—day after day his column talked about nothing else. Aku, the disc jockey, and Norman Reyes on KONA-TV added their voices. Rip Yeager, master of movie director John Ford's yacht, ARAner, organized a volunteer bureau of yachting wives. The Bank of Ketchikan offered to withhold foreclosure for another month. (A logging company was standing by ready to buy the ship for scuttling when she came under the hammer.) In Seattle, Harold Huyeke and his friend Captain Raynaud

Kortum

Jack Johnson, veteran ship chandler on the San Francisco waterfront, points out to Captain Klebingat some gear he later sent down to Honolulu as a donation for FALLS OF CLYDE's restoration.

FALLS OF CLYDE receiving four new iron lower masts in Honolulu, 1970. Bishop Museum

FALLS OF CLYDE reaches Seattle, 1959, from Ketchikan where she had served as a floating oil depot since 1922. Associated Press

*Interestingly enough, in the letter that went to Wright were two photostats of W. A. Coulter drawings from the *San Francisco Call*. One, dated November 16, 1898, depicted the FALLS OF CLYDE arriving off the Farallons on that date with the speedy MERIONETH after a race up the Pacific from Cape Horn. And the other, December 21, was an account of Captain Matson's buying the CLYDE for the Hawaiian trade. Coulter was staff artist for the *Call* for many years. Wright pushed the latter drawing into print in the *Honolulu Advertiser*.

offered to lend $10,000 of their own savings to hold the ship if Honolulu was serious. Honolulu *was* serious . . . Matson Navigation Company gave $5,000 and Mrs. Lurline Roth, daughter of Captain Matson, contributed generously. People in all walks of life responded. Schoolchildren distributed tin cans with a slot in the top, labeled "*Join the crew!* FALLS OF CLYDE *fund.*"

Bob Krauss reported in his column that the fund drive went "over the top" on June 29, 1963—two days before the deadline to meet the $18,950 mortgage. The people of Hawaii owned the ship!

The United States Navy responded and its tug MOCTOBI was detailed to tow the ship to Hawaii. It was November and a stormy passage, but the old ship weathered it well. After all, she was going *home.*

I was on the wharf at Honolulu when the FALLS OF CLYDE arrived. Whistles were blowing and the fire brigade made a splendid display. Great plumes of water shot into the air from the fireboat and from trucks on an adjoining pier. As the FALLS OF CLYDE neared the wharf on that day in November 1963, fair Hawaiian ladies threw flowers on her decks. She was made fast and the gangway put on. Dressed in their royal robes, the Hawaiian delegation boarded the ship and climbed on the afterdeck. High-ranking naval officers and many other notables were there to greet her.

It was an impressive ceremony. The Reverend Abraham Akaka said a prayer and there was singing, as only Hawaiians can sing. Dr. Force, on behalf of the Bishop Museum which will sponsor the restoration, thanked the U. S. Navy for towing the ship from Seattle to Honolulu. I spoke last in my role as Chief Technical Adviser for the restoration ahead.

I spoke on behalf of my friend, this old ship. I expressed our gratitude to all those people, rich and poor, who had made this moment possible for both of us. I predicted that the people of Hawaii would restore the ship to her former grace and beauty, and that she would become a source of pride for all who saw her. When I said all that, a lump came to my throat and my voice broke. It is not given to everyone to see his dream come true.

A multitude of volunteers subsequently began work on the ship without pay. But progress was slow, money did not come in, interest in the ship waned. It was only after the Bishop Museum became sole owner of the ship about four years ago, that the picture brightened and funds became available. Dr. Force engaged Captain Jim Kleinschmidt, formerly with Mystic Seaport, to be in charge of restoration. Jim is young and energetic and he got things moving. The chart house and cabin and the poop deck have been restored. Four new iron lower masts went into the ship, followed in due course by their topmasts. My old friend from sailing ship days, Jack Dickerhoff, perhaps the last practicing master sailing ship rigger in the world, has begun fitting a spider web of shrouds and stays, all cut to an exact fit from large and awkward iron rigging wire. They say there are a thousand rules of thumb in the sailing ship riggers' trade and Jack must know them all.

Meanwhile, Sir William Lithgow, grandson of the man who built the CLYDE (originally the firm was called Russell and Co., it is now Lithgow, Ltd.), has been to Honolulu and taken a warm interest in the ship. He has had his shipyard in Glasgow roll steel yards and bands and sent them to Honolulu—a donation that I would put at something like $75,000. Sir William has supplied brass binnacles, bell and bell harp, and other antiquities. The State of Hawaii has set aside Pier Five as a permanent berth for the vessel. She is clean and shipshape again and receiving visitors. A few years from now the FALLS OF CLYDE will be a hundred years old. Her future is assured and here she will lie—an Indiaman in her youth, a pioneer in the Hawaii passenger trade in mid-life, and subsequently a sailing oil tanker plying between California and Hawaii. She is the only ship with yards on all four masts and flying the flag of Hawaii that ever entered the Port of Honolulu.

Recently I found a news item in the *Hilo Tribune* of June 24, 1899, listing her passengers during a turn-of-the-century voyage:

The FALLS OF CLYDE, *C. P. Matson master, arrived at Hilo on Thursday afternoon with the following passengers: A. Oliver, B. F. Howland, H. Piper, P. C. LeBlond, L. F. LeBlond; Wm. Matson, Chas. A. Gibson, J. S. Clark, Lillie B. Matson, Emilie S. Gibson, A. Humphries, Lurline Matson, Chas. P. Gibson, Wilder Wright. She brought freight to the value of $44,211.84. The net tonnage of the* CLYDE *is 1740 tons.*

A few days later the *Hawaii Herald* itemized this cargo; it paints a picture of bygone trade with the mainland:

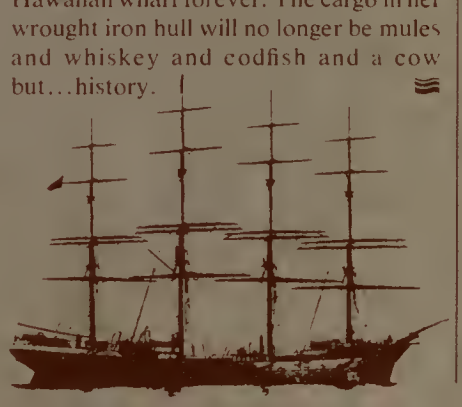
The ship FALLS OF CLYDE *which arrived last Thursday from San Francisco had the following cargo: 616 bbls. flour, 21 pkgs. of beer, 1714 lbs. sugar, 301 cases canned goods, 77 cases hats and caps, 2382 ctls. barley, 45 ctls. wheat, 48 pkgs. paints and oils, 157 pkgs. groceries, provisions, 80 sacks middlings, 815 bales hay, 6578 lbs. bread, 70,162 feet lumber, 480 lbs. lard, 1080 sacks of bran, 26 bales dry goods, 2745 lbs. cracked corn, 395 lbs. hops, 1083 lbs. tobacco, 320 tons fertilizer, 200 bbls. and 850 sacks lime, 11 tons coal, 20 cs. whiskey, 18 cs. boots and shoes, 7 rolls leather, 56 ctls. corn, 20 cs. drugs, 55 cs. soap, 20 cases hardware, 3 tanks acid, 109 coils rope, 500 lbs. dried fruit, 4 cs. honey, 67 bbls. salt, 1688 lbs. soda, 25 mules, 207 lbs. cheese, 25 reels wire, 474 lbs. codfish, 1 cow, 12 sacks potatoes 28,789 lbs. beans, 16 cs. + 26 bbls. salmon, 10 cs. candles, 781 lbs. butter, 15 cs. meal, 500 lbs. pease, 100 lbs. tea, 10 crates onions.*

The same newspaper told about her owner paying a visit to the islands:

William Matson managing owner of the Matson Line of sailing vessels came down on the FALLS OF CLYDE *accompanied by his wife and daughter. They are the guests of J. A. Scotts' 'Wainaku Lawn.' This is Captain Matson's first visit to Hilo in 18 months and he expressed surprise at the growth of the business here and the number of new residents. During his short stay here he will consider a proposition, which if carried out, will be of great benefit to the businessmen of Hilo.*

We don't know what the proposition was, but as the decades rolled by a great line of steamers blossomed in the island trade carrying the Matson flag with seven stars in a circle—the seven sailing ships the great shipowner started his business with.

The Matson Navigation Company has passed to new ownership but the FALLS OF CLYDE, one of the stars on a flag that flies over the most modern of container ships, will quietly lie alongside a Hawaiian wharf forever. The cargo in her wrought iron hull will no longer be mules and whiskey and codfish and a cow but...history.



The Roth twins' debut — THE 1939 social event

By MILLIE ROBBINS

"They were launched like luxury liners" was the apt observation of a young oldtimer who'd attended the coming out party of the Roth twins, Lurline (now Mrs. James F. Coonan of Woodside) and Berenice (Mrs. Charles Spalding of Hillsborough). The shipping tycoon Captain William Matson was their grandfather, remember?

It was at a sumptuous ball at Filoli that the William P. Roths presented their daughters on September 9, 1939. That marked the 89th anniversary of the date on which this state made its debut into the union, incidentally, but this had nothing to do with the case.

Some 800 guests had been invited and undoubtedly there had been no regrets as this double dive into the social swim gave promise of being THE function of what was an extraordinarily brilliant season. A large bevy of the most prominent buds bowed in rapid succession that year virtually all at events on the Peninsula and most of them at the Burlingame Country Club.

But the Roth ramble was anticipated as the blast of the season and no one was disappointed. The setting, of course, couldn't have been topped. The estate which the Roths had acquired not long before was impressively beautiful as to house and gardens; the hosts genial and popular as were their offspring. Besides, identical twins always seem to have a certain special cachet.

LAUNCHED IN STYLE

Twins Lurline and Berenice Roth made their debuts in 1939 at a lavish ball given by their parents, Mr. and Mrs. William P. Roth (Mrs. Roth is pictured at right). Eight hundred guests were invited to the party that took place at Filoli, the Roths' estate.

When they were young, the girls consistently dressed alike and most people couldn't tell them apart. One was said to have had a tiny mole, a sort of beauty mark, on one cheek but few could remember WHICH one.

They wore identical gowns for their debuts, too, designed with white satin bodices and full silver brocade skirts over hoops. A San Francisco couturiere had gone to Paris to select the materials but because World War II had broken out on the continent ran into difficulty trying to get passage back to the states. She finally arrived just four days before the dance and into a flurry to get the dresses cut, sewn and fitted in time.

The problem of the debs' identities was neatly solved, though. Each wore a brooch with her name outlined in diamonds.

Another untoward circumstance developed the day before the function. It was discovered that the long driveway leading from the county road to the house had been so heavily oiled as to make it virtually impassable. A rush call was put through for truckloads of gravel to be delivered post haste and spread thickly over the sticky substance. (Mrs. Roth herself supervised that operation.)

This roadway, recalls our informant, subsequently was illuminated by sheets of artificial flames that cast a somewhat weird glow which could be seen for miles around. The paths in the magnificent flood-lighted gardens where bands of strolling musicians playing Gypsy tunes, folk music and rumbas were outlined with a myriad of tapers set in green glass containers.

Even a residence this size is not large enough to accommodate comfortably so many people at such a lavish soiree. So although dancing was enjoyed in the ballroom, supper was served in a specially constructed blue canvas pavilion in the courtyard.

This was a wonderland. To give you some idea . . .

White gauze on which were painted white trees and silver deer covered the canvas inside. Around the room was a four feet high cypress hedge sprayed white, and in each corner tubs held white trees hung with silvered fruit. A huge umbrella, about 100 feet in diameter with woodland scenes painted on its deep valance, was suspended from the ceiling.

A magenta canvas covered the floor and satin of the same color covered the 52 tables set for 10. The laden-with-delectable-viands buffet table along one wall featured four white spun sugar horses, saluting the interest in equines the twins share with their mother.

Invitations had been issued for 11 o'clock but it was closer to one a.m. before the ball really got rolling as guests motored in from numerous dinner parties given all over the county and in town.

The festivities went on full blast until 6 a.m. when a hearty breakfast was provided to refuel any sagging spirits and again gathered momentum.

'Tis said there still was a covey of stalwarts on hand around midday.

One of the most creatively important commissions of my career began with the design and execution of a series of fetes for Mrs. William Roth.

In each case, these works encompassed a many-faceted and complex arrangement including the design and execution of tapestries, sculptures, paintings and ornamental lighting.

Mrs. Roth's great taste and sense of arrangement was a platform to support all these different dimensions towards making an enchantment.

With Mabel Ah Sam, Mrs. Roth and I discussed the themes and the flowers possible to use at the times planned. Then Mrs. Roth would go into action with her gardners to organize and implement the planting and planning so everything would be in bloom on time.

One year when we had planned large 17th century arrangements in the manner of the dutch painters, I especially wanted sunflowers and, as these are never in a commercial market, Mrs. Roth agreed to plant them. On a trip to Filoli for our over all organization, Mrs. Roth showed me a field of sunflowers. I was dazzled and couldn't believe its size. In saying this to Mrs. Roth, she told me this was only one of 4 fields that had been planted to be sure we had them flowering at the correct time. This is only one of the many unforgettable moments with this very great lady.

She also traveled to the Phillippines to arrange for the shipments of dendrobia orchids of the correct colors to complement the specially woven silks for the tablecloths from Thailand.

Of tremendous importance to my career was an invention for her that I named "Fabric Mosaic" tapestries. In planning one of the balls for her grandchild, Bren, I wanted to base its concept on the historic roots of the Matson legend -- the

Lurline sailing from San Francisco to the Hawaiian Islands and its tremendous importance to the development of the islands. I wanted to dramatize and capture in a sense the quality and feeling of the Hawaiian King's feather capes. In doing this, I used small pieces of many fabrics applied one above the other in a "feathered" manner. These first tapestries for Mrs. Roth became the inspiration for a great series of tapestries for Nieman-Marcus in Dallas, the Hilton Hawaiian Village Convention Center in Honolulu, the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Los Angeles, the Ritz-Carlton in Chicago and many more in private collections.

The images of Mrs. Roth, her gardens, her house and her family hav constant and prominent place in my wife's and my heart.

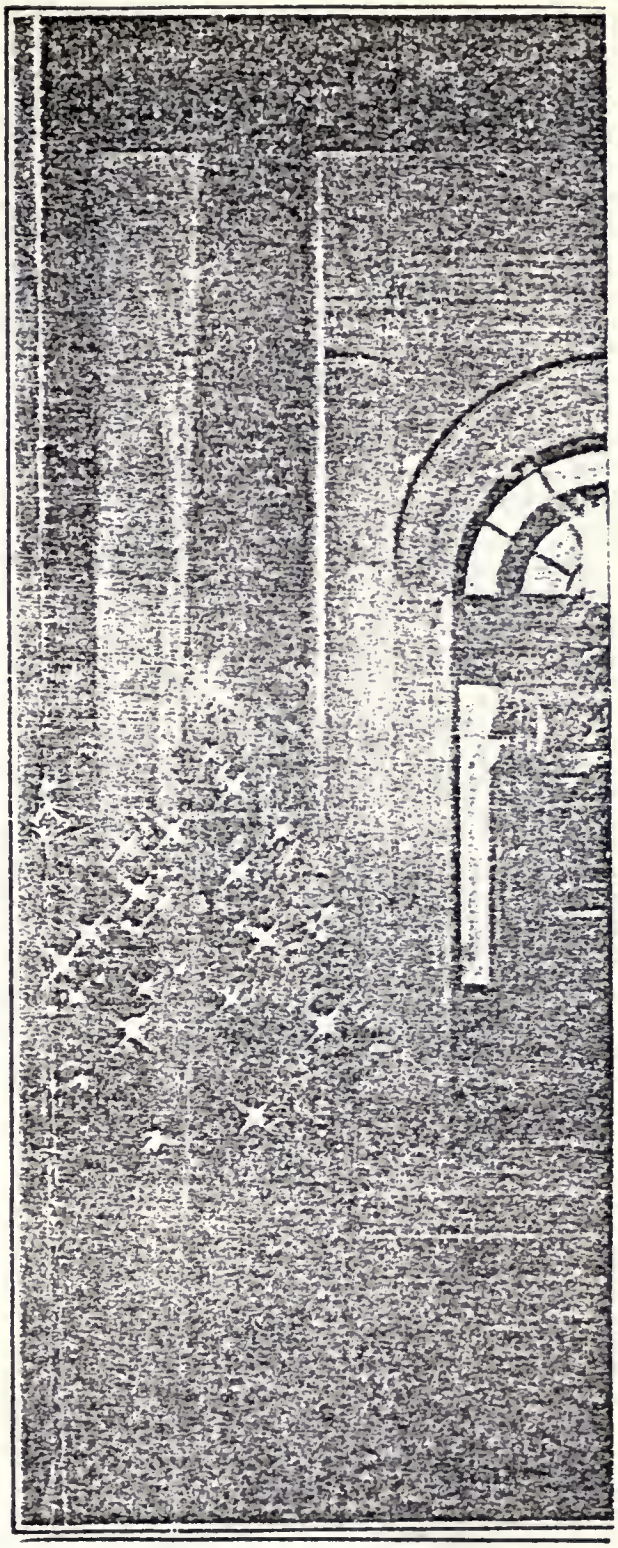
These quickly composed notes will be used for the chaper in my own book which will be devoted to her with our love and gratitude for her appreciati and belief!

Mrs. Roth didn't just commission these works, she was an integral p of their production.

Christmases At Filoli Recalled

APPENDIX L

By Ann Shaw



"I remember the first Christmas at Filoli," says Mrs. William P. Roth. "That was in 1938. That first year that we arrived in Filoli, we had just finished cocktails on Christmas Eve, and were going in to dinner, which we always had in the ballroom. All of a sudden we heard this music. The children's choir from Woodside came, and apparently they had always come for the Bourns.

"We opened the door, and here were all these little candles. I'd say about forty children were there, all singing Christmas carols. So we brought them into the ballroom.

"The choir was such a happy surprise. Nobody told me they were coming, so it was a most terrific surprise.

"It was a new experience for Mr. Roth and me. When we lived in San Francisco we just had a quiet Christmas Eve dinner, no Christmas carols.

"For years afterward, every Christmas the children came from the village choir in Woodside. They were adorable. Some of them were just this high, you know.

"They sang everything, and generally there was a new little star who sang especially well."

Now there are just memories of Christmases past at Filoli for shipping heiress Mrs. William P. Roth. She once presided as mistress of one of the most fabulous estates in the San Francisco Bay Area. An octogenarian now, Mrs. Roth makes her home in nearby Hillsborough these days. She donated the forty-three room Filoli home to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The William P. Roths of the Matson Navigation Company lived in the home from 1938 to 1975. They were the second owners.

The estate was built in 1916 by Irishman William B. Bourn. Bourn was heir to the Empire Gold Mine, and head of companies which eventually became P G & E, Christian Brothers Winery and the San Francisco Water Department. Bourn called the estate Filoli, short for his motto: Fight, Love, Live. The Roths preferred to think the first syllable in Filoli stood for fidelity rather than fight. It gave it a more peaceful sound.

"We always had the big tree — eighteen feet — in the big room, and then another one in the back study where we had presents. We sometimes had another one in the hall. The trees were all cut fresh from the mountains.

"We always hired a lady to decorate the trees. She'd come, bring her daughter, her son and several young people. They'd have Christmas music going all day, and they'd decorate the tree. It was a big tree. You'd put the things near the bottom that the children couldn't break, and then you'd go from there.

"No berries, no popcorn, because I didn't like popcorn all over the floor. Just ornaments, nice ornaments. I've saved them all throughout the years.

"In the summer, it was always fragrant at Filoli because of all the flowers picked from the garden. But in December it was all the Christmas trees, the wonderful evergreen smell."

California Living Magazine
SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER & CHRONICLE
Sunday December 17, 1978

In its heyday, sixteen to twenty gardeners lived on the estate. The gardens then featured, and still do, seventeen acres of pampered camellias, pansies, tulips, and roses. Five hundred and fifty bushes make up the elegant rose garden of the Irish Georgian home.

"We had our own holly. I had holly trees that were not in the formal part of the garden, so they could be cut for the house. I especially like the green and white holly. My gardeners made all the wreaths for the house out of all the material right out of Filoli. We had real holly wreaths, and then the evergreen ones. We had a wreath in every window, and they were all home made.

"I also had candles in several rooms of the home. They were in the living room, and we generally had Christmas decorations on the tables.

"Every room, every bedroom had a fireplace. They were all burning on Christmas Eve."

The Filoli Estate, now open to the public except during the winter months (tours will resume in February), lies secluded near the Crystal Springs Reservoir. Canadian geese winter in a nearby wild area. Two herds of deer, Irish Red Deer and Japanese Skin Deer, forage through the grounds adjacent to and on the more than 700-acre estate.

In the old carriage house near the home is a unique collection of antique phaetons and gigs. They were the property of Mrs. Roth. Her primary interests, while at Filoli, were in horticulture and horses. In fact, an entire room was set aside in the main house for the purpose of housing the hundreds of trophies and ribbons won by horses Mrs. Roth bred and raised at her Why Worry Farm.

"When the children were little, generally somebody got a horse for Christmas. The horse would have to appear at the front door, and then the child would try it out. Sometimes successfully, and sometimes not.

"I remember one pony that ran away with one of the Roth children. I'm sure Maggie got a horse, Brannie got a horse once. I think she got two horses, a pony when she was little, and then when she got bigger, she got another."

Filoli was once the gathering place for San Francisco and Peninsula gentry, who met for parties, debutante balls, and the traditional Christmas Eve celebration in the enormous ballroom.

The main ballroom has crystal chandeliers that once hung in the Palace of Versailles. The ballroom is also gilded with two hundred pounds of gold from Bourn's Grass Valley gold mines. On the walls are murals of the Irish countryside and Killarney Lakes. The huge fireplace with the fifteen-foot hearth is where the Bourns toasted the end of Prohibition in 1933.

"Christmas Eve was very gay. Dinner was always in the ballroom, where we generally had eight to ten tables set up. It was all just family.

"We always had a big buffet. We had turkey, sometimes duck, a pig once in a while, plum puddings and chocolate roll for desert.

"Everybody sort of helped out with dinner in the kitchen. You had to; you could never get enough people to serve dinner to fifty people on Christmas Eve.

"My gardeners came in and helped, and maybe my daughters' gardener. Everybody helped.

"Everyone was dressed. It was really formal.

"Then, after dinner in the ballroom, we all sat in that big living room — about fifty people with no place to sit, but arms of chairs, children on the floor. Then singer George Alexander got all the children singing, which was great. He did funny things. He acted as a Santa Claus, and clowned up. The children loved it. Mr. Roth never dressed up as Santa Claus. That wasn't his cup of tea. He was never Santa Claus.

"It ended with George singing the *Lord's Prayer*. That was always the last thing. He had a guitar . . . and then he would sing the *Lord's Prayer*.

"Christmas morning was awful," she laughs, "because the children always wanted to open up the presents early, so everybody would have to get up early for opening presents.

"It was a mess, because I had three children (the twins Lurline and Berniece and William Matson Roth), and they each had three children. And everybody got presents, so it was simply dreadful. Everything was mixed up, and in the end, half the time the children didn't know who gave them what.

"I don't know why we kept that up for so long, but we did because it seemed so traditional. As the children got older it was ridiculous, but we still did it.

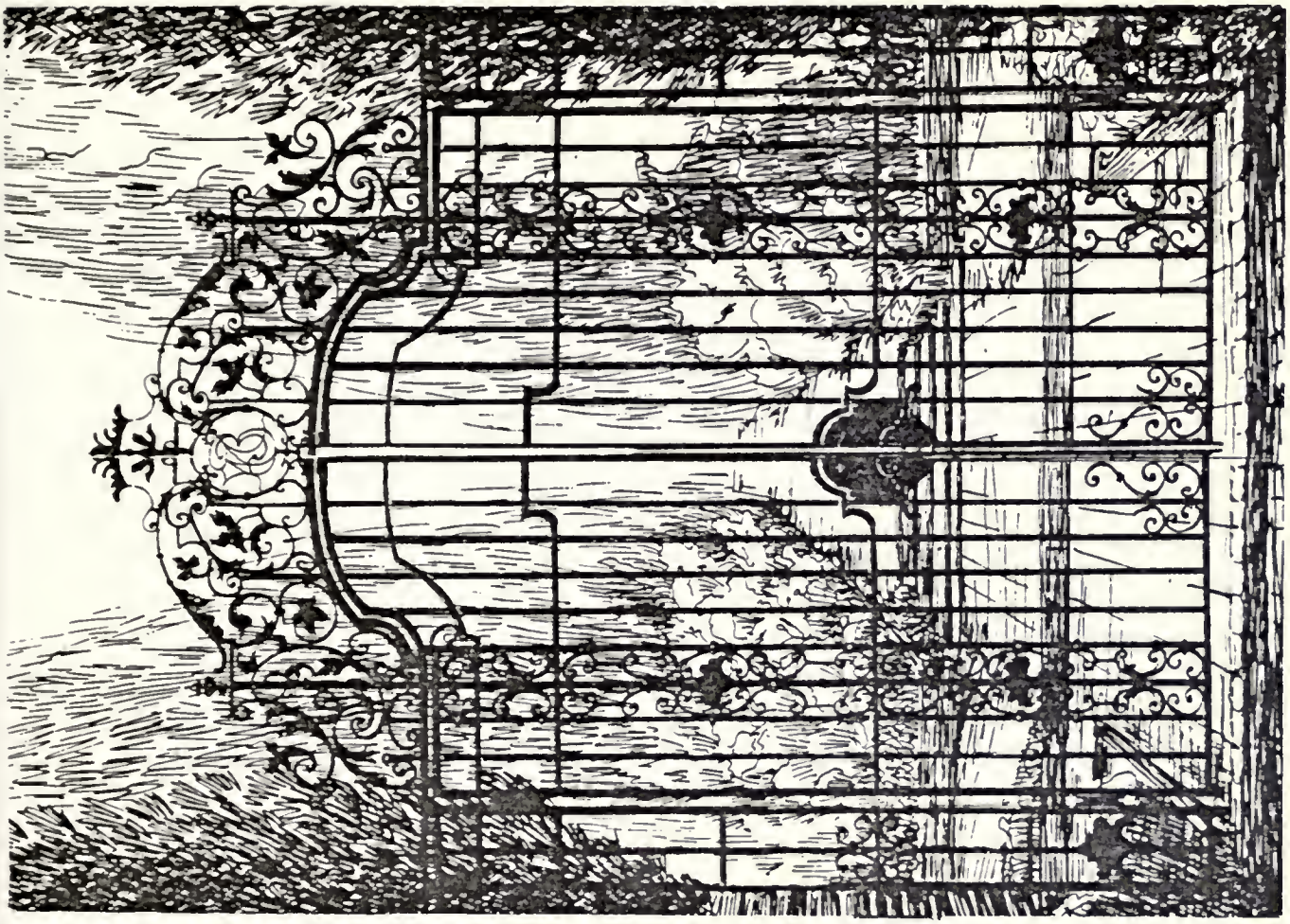
"We had dogs — labradors and poodles — on the first Christmas we had poodles, and we always had two labradors. Their tails always knocked everything over. Labradors are so clumsy in a room.

"I always used to hide presents in that big house, and then I couldn't find them. It always happened. I would hide them in closets, in desk drawers, and then forget what closet, and what desk.

"I would go to church services at St. Matthew's in San Mateo on Christmas morning. On Christmas Eve the whole family always went as well.

"Often my husband's family from Hawaii would come from Honolulu for Christmas. They'd bring leis, fragrant to mix in with the evergreen.

"Christmases at Filoli were happy times. It was a friendly house." □



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Background

Filoli is a 654-acre estate located on the eastern slope of the Coast Range mountains about 30 miles south of San Francisco. The estate is a registered state historical landmark and is on the national register of historic places. The central 39 acres contain a 36,000 square foot main residence and the magnificent Lurline B. Roth gardens and were given in 1975 to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In addition, Mrs. Roth leased to the National Trust an adjacent 86-acre parcel, title to which will pass to the Trust by gift. The Lurline B. Roth Charity Foundation also gave to the Trust an Endowment of $2,400,000 to assist the Trust in the maintenance of its properties.

Organization

It was Mrs. Roth's wish that a local Board be established to supervise the management, maintenance, and enhancement of the property. This wish was fulfilled in agreement with the National Trust and led to the formal establishment, on February 13, 1976, of Filoli Center as a non-profit corporation and the appointment of a Board of Trustees and an Executive Director.

Acquisition of Additional Property

Filoli Center has also acquired the additional 529 acres of the Roth Estate with its unspoiled and serene landscape and its extensive variety of flora and fauna. The U.S. Department of the Interior has stated: "Filoli is the last large estate in northern California of such sumptuous magnitude and pristine original beauty which survives unblighted by the intrusion of subdivisions."

Purposes of Filoli Center

In addition to preserving and displaying this historic property with its handsome main residence and superb gardens, the Center is establishing important educational programs in horticulture for the professional and for the home gardener, including a work-study scholarship program. Conferences, seminars, exhibits and other educational and cultural programs will be added as funds and personnel permit. Some of these activities will serve the purpose of demonstrating the importance of relating architecture to the natural environment and to gardens and landscaping.

The Friends of Filoli

During 1976, the Trustees authorized the organization of the Friends of Filoli, which has its own officers and By-Laws. The President of the "Friends" is an ex officio Trustee. Letters of invitation to become a Friend of Filoli were sent out in December 1976. Membership of the Friends now exceeds 1500, of whom some 300 are active volunteers.

In January 1978, the Friends of Filoli applied for independent status as a non-profit corporation. This status has been granted.

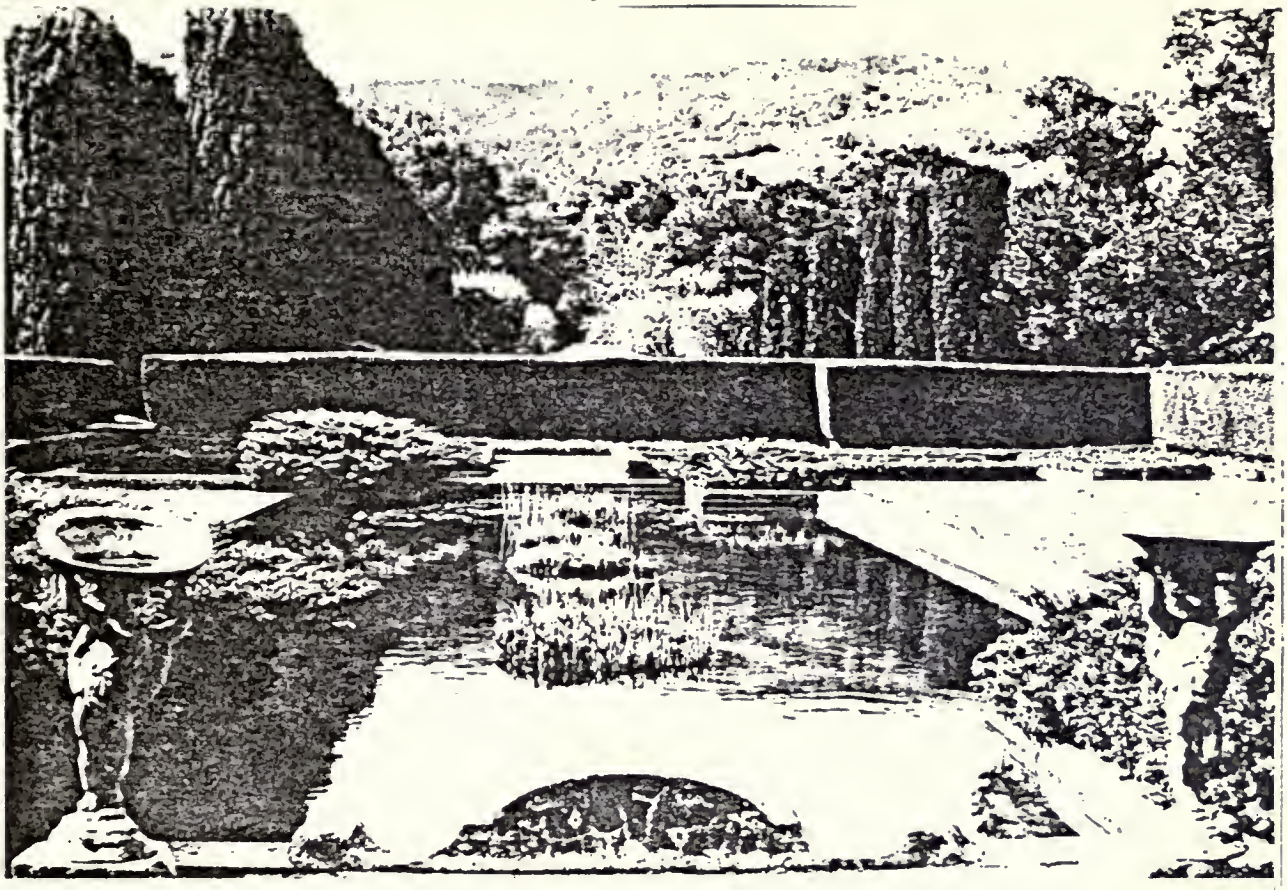
The Friends of Filoli guide the work of the volunteers, including the training of docents who conduct tours, operate a sales shop from which visitors may purchase plants and garden-related merchandise, and have occasional special benefits. The Trustees and the community owe a great debt of gratitude to the volunteers whose interest in and labors for Filoli Center have done so much to sustain the Center.

Finances

Filoli Center receives no public funds. Income is received from the endowment, from the tours, from plant sales, from memberships in the Friends of Filoli, and from special events. The Center is currently operating in the black and within budget. To continue to do so, it needs regular gift support. In addition, it needs capital funds for the roof repair and rewiring of the main residence, new water storage and delivery systems, further repair of the greenhouses, refurbishing of the pool pavilion and bath-houses, and for a Visitors Information Center which will also serve as a shop for sale of plants.

A Capital Fund Campaign

With the objective of ensuring that Filoli Center will be able to preserve and enhance these properties for public service and enjoyment, and to strengthen its educational program in horticulture, the Trustees have launched a fund campaign for not less than $3,000,000 which will be used variously to meet operating expenses, capital fund needs and additions to endowment.



Filoli — View to the hills, over the sunken garden and through an avenue of Irish yew.
Photograph by Ron Herman.

The Flowering Shrubs of Filoli

MAI K. ARBEGAST, *Berkeley, California*

The beautiful gardens at Filoli have benefited from Mai Arbegast's interim supervision; she remains a member of the Filoli Board of Trustees. Mai is a landscape architect and horticultural consultant.

Filoli, the most recent addition to the properties of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, was until December 1975 the San Mateo County residence of Mrs. Lurline Matson Roth. It was one of the largest private gardens on the west coast. The garden is a personal expression of Mrs. Roth's interest in and love for flowering plants.

The garden was originally designed and built for Mr. William B. Bourn by Bruce Porter, garden designer, in 1915. The landscape design was the direct expression of the owner and the designer working together to create a very special garden within the incomparable setting of the Crystal Springs Watershed area south of San Francisco. The designer's job was to understand the site and the client's needs and desires, and to interpret them in a design. The owner was a successful businessman, convervative in his design and social tastes, who desired to find a site which reminded him of the Irish countryside. He needed a garden where he could provide activities for his guests such as croquet and lawn bowling, as well as to entertain, with a garden for strolling and

viewing plants and the larger scene. Views to the expansive natural landscape beyond the built gardens were always carefully framed and encouraged. The rise of the wooded hills to the west and the long view down the valley to the Crystal Springs Lakes to the north were most important.

Bruce Porter was basically a painter who, because of his interest in plants, worked with Willis Polk the architect for the house, on projects involving landscape design. Porter was much taken with the natural landscape of California and had a keen interest in trying to find the best way to fit the architectural garden into the natural landscape. He worked closely with Miss Isabella Worn, better known as Bella Worn, a superb plantswoman, floral designer and interior decorator. She was responsible for most of the plant selections in the development of Filoli. Her work which bridged the gap between the original planting design and the occupancy of Mrs. Roth, continuing with Mrs. Roth for twelve years until Miss Worn's death, gave a continuity to the garden design which was most important and has been little mentioned.

Bella Worn and Louis Moriconi, head gardener, among hedges of lavender.

Other people important to the stewardship and maintenance of the gardens were Louis G. Moriconi who began working in the gardens for Mr. Bourn in 1918 and continued for fifty-two years until 1968. He passed on his legacy of knowledge and work to Leslie Thiringer, a Hungarian cavalryman, who had received his master's degree in animal husbandry, but emigrated to the United States, because of conditions in his country, to become head gardener at Filoli for some twenty years from 1952 to 1972.

The garden design as executed was architectural in emphasis with a mixture of many styles ranging from the Roman Renaissance Revival period through the English Landscape Tradition. It is a series of gardens, each architectural and more or less symmetrical, placed on the basic spine of a major north-south path from a southernmost viewpoint at the highest level down to a view of the reservoir at the north end.

Many of the original plants were selected because they were able to withstand the onslaught of great numbers of deer. The climate and weather were also important in determining which plants could be used. The prevailing winds which traverse the garden both in the morning and afternoon are very strong. The heat from the afternoon sun is intense. Minimum temperatures in winter dip down to 25°F. regularly and to 17°F. occasionally; while summer temperatures regularly reach 80 and 90°F. The moderating influence of the coastal fog which hangs just at the ridgetops to the west gives Filoli very special air-conditioning. Because of these climatic influences and also because the major concept of the design was to provide outdoor rooms for separate activities, certain plants were used throughout the garden to pull the design together visually. These basic plants were used at the main entrance, around the house to the west and southward to the viewing platform, the southernmost point in the garden.

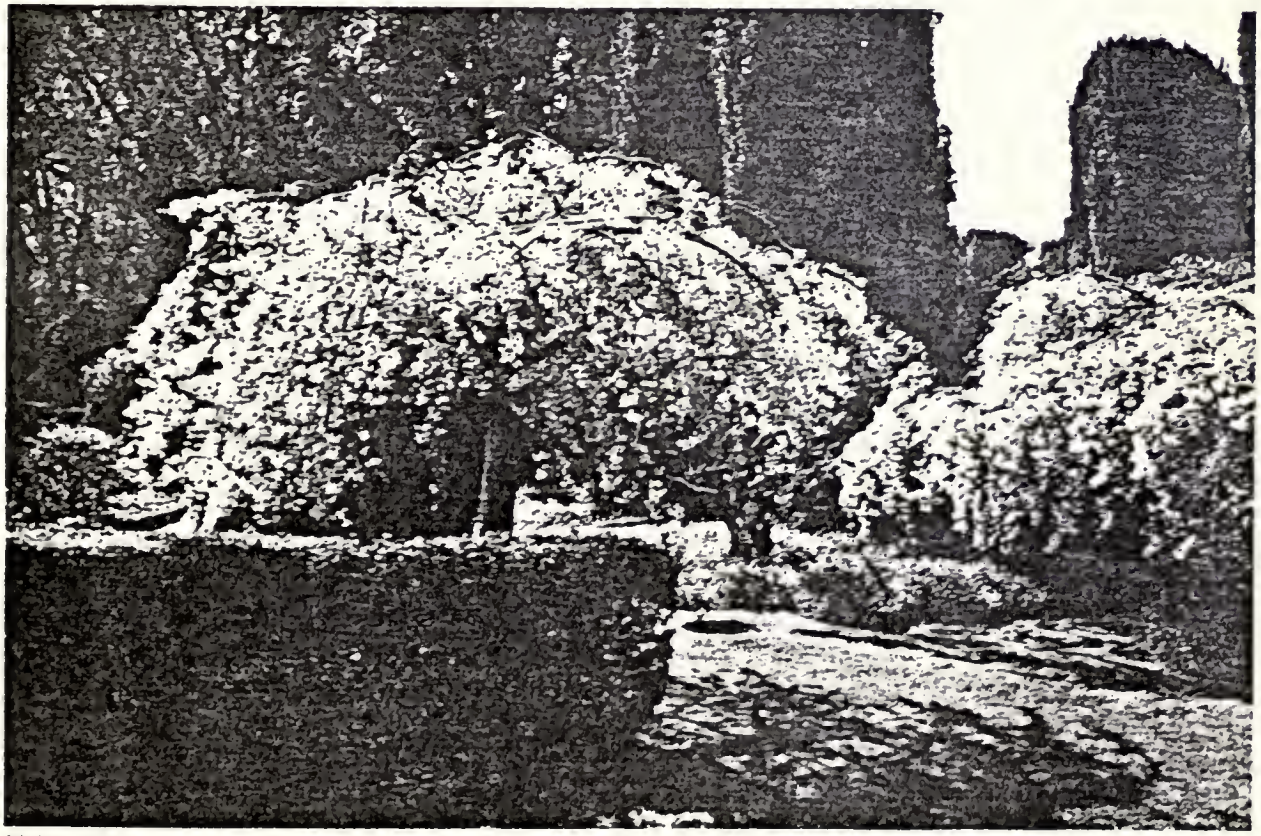
Very few California native plants were used, except as they already existed as magnificent large specimen coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) because such plants were

Filoli — *Ulmus glabra* 'Camperdownii'.

not available in nurseries. The major trees and shrubs which fulfilled the climatic and deer-proof requirements were primarily European in origin and many were brought back as seeds to this country by Mr. Bourn himself as he travelled back and forth to Europe. They are:

English Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
Dutch Holly (*Ilex aquifolium* 'Van Tol')
Irish Yews (*Taxus baccata* 'Stricta')
Dwarf English Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa')
European Olive (*Olea europaea*)
Blue Atlas Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca')
Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Atropunicea')
London Plane Tree (*Platanus* × *acerifolia*)
Pfitzer's Juniper (*Juniperus chinensis* 'Pfitzeriana')
Tamarix or Spanish Juniper (*Juniperus sabina* 'Tamariscifolia')

One of the most important parts of the garden is the Walled Garden. This is an area



Filoli — Flowering cherries. Color photographs by the author.

of large dimension, measuring 277 feet × 167 feet enclosed by a brick wall varying in height from 8 feet 6 inches to 11 feet 6 inches, with wrought iron gates closing it off from other parts of the garden. There are at least six smaller gardens within the walls. Each is seen separately, and one comes upon them within the garden somewhat by surprise. It is an intriguing place. This garden was designed to turn completely into itself. It is one of the most colorful sections of the estate, planted with bedding annuals, bulbs, and many flowering shrubs and trees.

A major impression which persists long after one has visited Filoli is the color which comes from the flowering plants in dramatic settings. This magic can be attributed to the intuitive sense of color and flair for display exercised in the gardens by Bella Worn. Her selections of flowering shrubs, many of which came from Toichi Domoto's Nursery in Hayward thirty or more years ago is evident in the lavish displays of *Camellia reticulata* cultivars which overhang many other colorful plants during the months of February and March. In March and April the burst of bloom of three azalea cultivars — the brilliant red of Azalea "Ward's Ruby', the cerise red of Azalea 'Hinodegiri', and the crimson of Azalea 'Hino-Crimson' — form belts or drifts of red through the garden. Many of the plants were selected and ultimately woven through the design with great artistry.

In spite of the major deterrents of deer and climate many beautiful effects were obtained which still hold up today. It is interesting to note that many of the plants which were used in the original scheme are not available in nurseries today because they have fallen out of fashion. For example, Kashmir bouquet or *Clerodendrum bungei*, a deciduous shrub with beautiful rosy-pink flowers carried in large terminal rounded heads of four to six inches in width, is rarely seen. This fragrant flower, member of the Verbena family, blooms in sun or shade in late summer and early fall when very few other shrubs are in flower. Interesting large heart-shaped leaves which are dark green above with reddish-purple hairs beneath and dark stems give off a fetid odor when bruised. (Therefore, its older name — *Clerodendrum foetidum*). This plant spreads by suckers and tends to run, thereby forming a complete mass of upright stems with terminal flowers held above the foliage at about two to three feet high. Planted in a hot protected south facing spot it gives color to an otherwise all green spot during the late summer. Cutting it back to the ground and treating it as a perennial allows it to renew its foliage and stems each year.

Another shrub which has been neglected and is beginning to be recognized and desired by gardeners again is the box-leaved myrtle, *Luma apiculata*, formerly called *Myrtus luma*, *Eugenia apiculata*, and *Myrceugenella apiculata*. It has a beautiful trunk of ochre or pale cinnamon color with exfoliating bark which reveals creamy underskin. These lovely effects are seen only when the plant has reached an age where the stems are at least an inch in diameter at the base. Plants at Filoli are about 15 feet tall with many upright stems from the base. Leaves are ovate to ½" long, dark green with an abrupt, almost spiny, tip and look very much like boxwood. New leaves emerge a deep bronze and expand to a deep green. The small white flowers have slightly incurved rounded petals and are held in small clusters over the entire plant in late summer and early autumn. Small black fruits are inconspicuous on the plant because they are lost against the bunchiness of the dark green foliage mass. This plant is seeding itself in the garden. In Golden Gate Park near the McLaren Rhododendron Dell *Luma* has been used as a clipped hedge. Many people do not recognize it to be the same plant because its natural form has been subordinated to a clipped hedge which most people assume to be boxwood.

Michelia figo (*Michelia fuscata*), the banana shrub, is an elegant plant of the Magnolia family which prospers in the climate at Filoli. For south and west exposures of hot afternoon sun and reflected heat off of buildings, *Michelia* is used as the complement to

camellias which prefer morning sun and afternoon shade. The leaf is slightly narrower than that of camellias, but quite similar in size and glossiness, color and the general habit of growth. The banana shrub has been used both as a clipped standard and as a loose shrub. Forty-year old plants at Filoli are approximately eighteen feet high. The axillary flowers of michelia are small (about an inch long) miniature magnolia-like, and pale yellow with a reddish edge in bud, opening up to reveal a rosy-maroon petal on the inside. The flowers are exceedingly fragrant, and on a warm summer day they smell very much like ripe bananas.

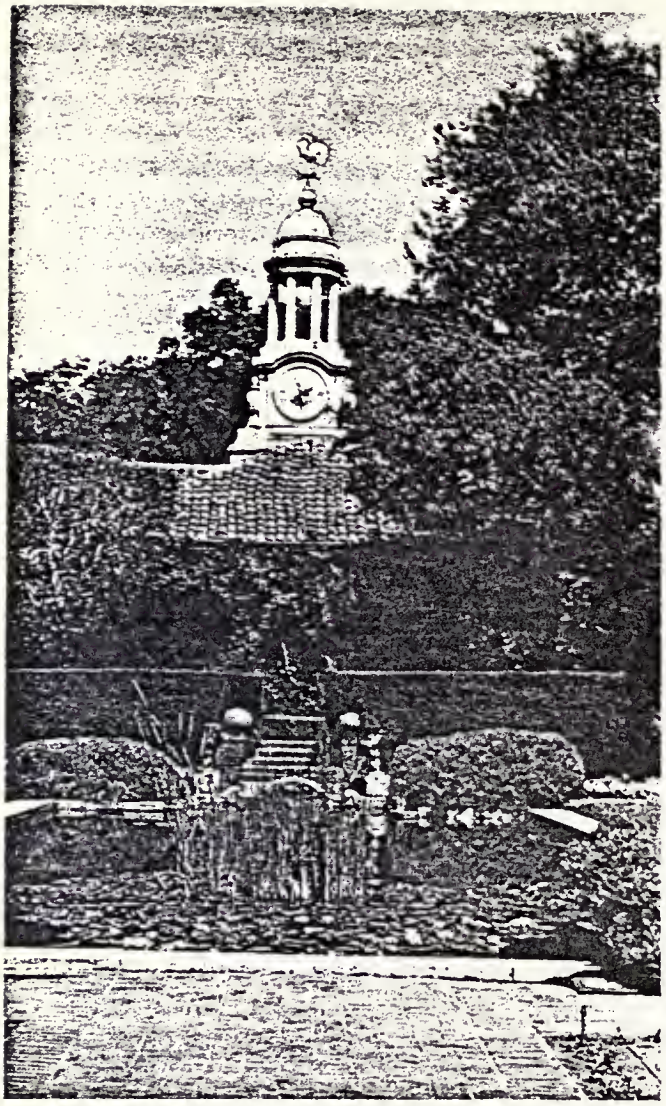
In thinking about plants which might work with already existing large plants, a substitute was required to match a michelia eight feet high, *Prunus caroliniana*, the Carolina laurel cherry, obtainable in larger size was used. The leaf size and shape are similar enough so that the differences are not noticeable except to those with a very discerning eye.

Viburnum × *burkwoodii* is an excellent half-evergreen shrub with fragrant flowers from late February through May and then sporadically throughout the rest of the year. The small flowers are white, pink in the bud, and are held in rounded clusters three to four inches wide. Deep green, glossy leaves with a distinctive greyish-brown felt effect beneath and on its stems distinguish it. One of the nice aspects of this viburnum is that it always has a few leaves maturing in the summer and early fall so that a touch of yellow and red is visible within the foliage mass. In the autumn depending on the amount of cold, the leaves turn a brilliant red. It is cold enough at Filoli so that such autumn coloration is expected. This is not the case in the more moderate climate of Berkeley and San Francisco where half of the leaves remain on the plant during winter. This plant has been used in a structural manner, clipped as a tight column, and with a rounded outline, although its basic form tends to be sideward with a somewhat horizontal emphasis. It is best planted in the sun or half-shade. Pruning should be done at the time of flowering or immediately after to insure flowers for the succeeding year.

Viburnum plicatum 'Mariesii', a relatively rare deciduous shrub is planted primarily to take advantage of its definite horizontal branching of side stems off an upright series of main stems. In pruning for best effect this natural tendency of the plant should be encouraged. The flowers appear as large white doilies about four to five inches wide in horizontal tiers. The fertile flowers are small, in an umbel surrounded by a ring of conspicuous white sterile flowers on the outside edge to give the doily effect. Unfortunately, at Filoli this plant has been clipped into a tight architectural form where the very distinctive quality which is special for this plant is not seen. With such tight pruning furthermore, very few flowers develop. Autumn leaf color is a gold-yellow.

For a very special white splash of bloom on a large shrub, it is difficult to find any competition for the pearlbush, *Exochorda* × *macrantha* 'The Bride', a cultivar received from Wayside Gardens many years ago. This large deciduous shrub, with grey-green leaves, is extremely floriferous so that it appears as an arching mass of white flowers — each about three-quarter inches wide, single, with a papery quality — held in long tight racemes over the entire plant. Although it flowers with its foliage almost fully expanded, it is difficult to see the leaves when the plant is in bloom. The pearlbush has been pruned so that it appears as a small tree with a wide head at least ten feet high, although its natural habit would be to have a number of major stems from the base. During most of the year this plant fades into the background.

Coronilla emerus, the scorpion senna, can be considered somewhat rare because of its lack of use in most California gardens. This shrub of delicate quality with relatively thin, small, apple-green compound leaves is placed along a red brick wall which faces the hot western sun in the afternoon. In this spot it grows very well. The plant appears to be espaliered, and is helped a little with a few wires which hold it loosely against the wall. It has a limber quality and is a lovely billowing mass. In



Filoli — Sunken garden, stable and clock tower.

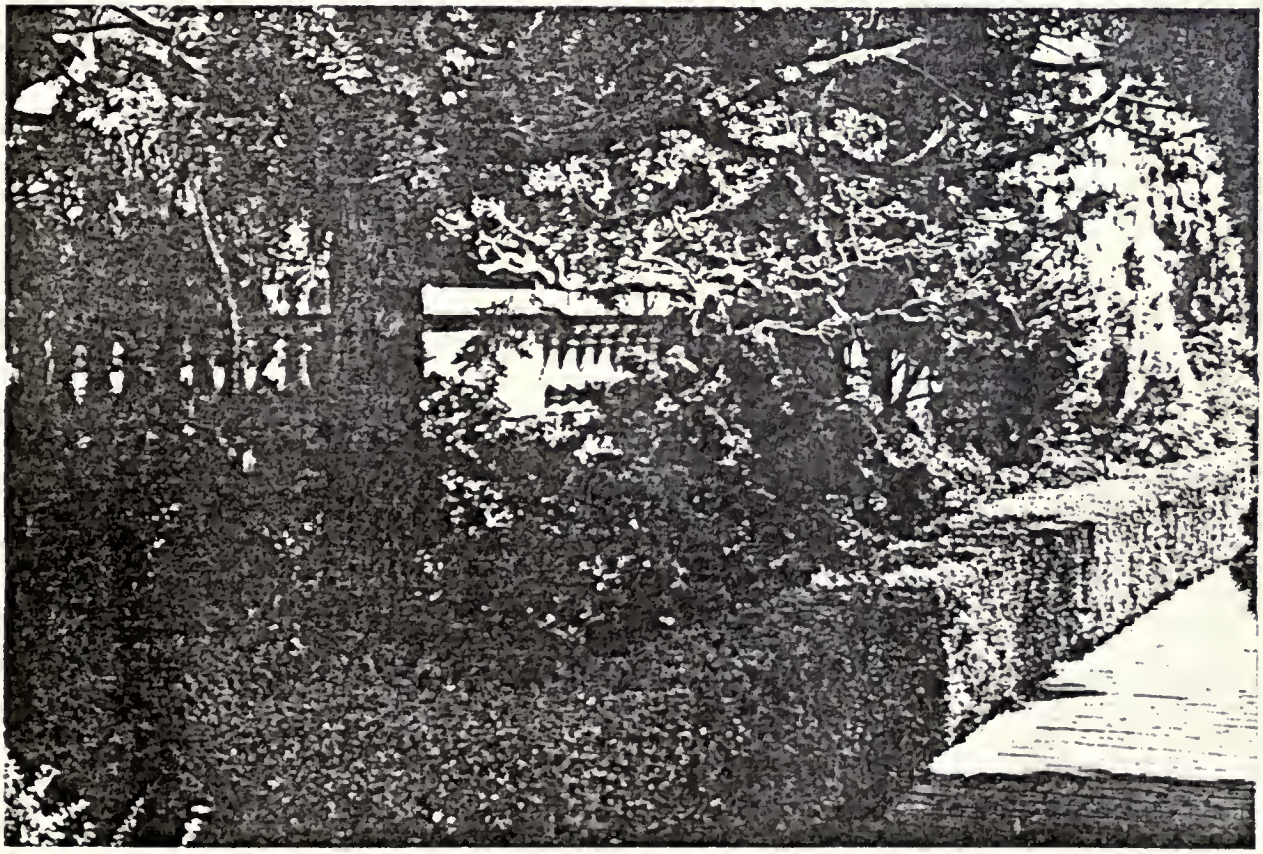
March and April small yellow and red pea-like flowers come from each leaf axil so that it appears as a puff of yellow against a soft green.

Rosa banksiae 'Lutea' the yellow Banksian rose, graces a number of the tall brick walls and bursts into magnificent and floriferous bloom from April through May. The small double yellow rose flowers completely clothe the stems. They are delicately fragrant. The plant is semi-evergreen with bright green leaves composed of three to five leaflets on smooth green shoots which are almost thornless. The trunks have developed on old plants to two inches in diameter and more. At Filoli these plants are placed on every exposure except a northern wall. This rose will climb to whatever height it has support. I have seen single plants completely engulf the entire rooftop of a small house. For so many years this rose was out of fashion, but it is now available in local nurseries.

Loropetalum chinensis, the Chinese witch hazel, is used as a tubbed plant at Filoli although it is an elegant evergreen shrub which will grow to ten feet in height and spread. The small white flowers have thin strap-shaped petals which are slightly curled inward and outward as witch hazel flowers. The leaves are small (1½ inches - 2 inches long) ovate, a medium grass-green (occasionally yellow-green because of lack of iron) with new foliage which appears a soft orange color. The older foliage turns to deep orange and red before dropping off the plant. Although this is an evergreen plant there is always a touch of red, because of maturing leaves, which gives the plant a special charm. The back of the leaf is sandpapery to the touch. This plant tends to grow downwards or as an arching specimen when it is young, and after it establishes itself will stretch upward and outward. It is freely branching with many small thin branchlets and forms a dense mounding plant. Because of the delicacy of its branching, it lends itself to pruning to develop any form which is desired. It grows in both sun and shade and is extremely versatile. Once established it is very vigorous and must be pruned to keep it within bounds. It is difficult to find this excellent plant in nurseries, but it is propagated readily by cuttings from half-ripened wood.

Daphne odora 'Marginata', the yellow-edged daphne or pink daphne, has been used throughout Filoli in warm shade situations. Some of the plants are over forty years old, although many have been replaced because of old age. The early flowers (February through April) with their delicate lemon-scent set up one of the themes which pervades the entire garden. (Lovely fragrances of certain plants through various sections of the garden, such as the daphne, star jasmine, wisteria, is unforgettable!) The tight small clusters of pale pink flowers with the yellow-margined pippin-apple green

Filoli — Gate to the wild garden.



Filoli — *Rhododendron* 'Ward's Ruby' contained by balustrade, hedge and path.

foliage are planted along north and east facing walls, and in amongst the trees where warmth and shade provide the ideal conditions for this plant at Filoli. In cooler summer situations such as Berkeley and San Francisco the daphne must be planted in much more exposed and warm situations for good flowering. Daphne is a plant which should be given minimum care and disturbance around its roots, and will do well.

Miss Worn used the dwarf pomegranate, *Punica granatum* 'Nana' as a special accent plant for its bright orange flowers and small red fruits. Some of the plants are over fifty years old and have reached full maturity. Where they have been allowed to reach their maximum height they are approximately eight feet tall and are clipped as standards on a single trunk with wide heads at least eight feet wide. In other areas they are clipped as rounded forms to three feet or slightly more. This deciduous shrub with small bright glossy deep green foliage has new leaves which emerge a coppery-red in color, and has been used for these effects in a very special way at Filoli.

During a second stage in the development of the garden in the 1940s, Mrs. Roth collected as many of the cultivars of *Camellia reticulata* as were available and placed them in sections of the Walled and Wild Garden at Filoli to give a mass effect of color. The cultivars of this camellia were repeated throughout various sections of these two gardens and the Sunken Garden as well. They are: 'Buddha', 'Shot Silk', 'Captain Rawes', 'Professor Tsai', 'Lion Head', 'Queen of Tali', 'Pagoda', 'Purple Gown', 'Noble Pearl', 'Confucius', 'Crimson Robe', 'Chrysanthemum Petals', 'Cornelian', 'Chang's Temple' and 'Willow Wood'. All have grown to good size and are placed so that one walks under them. Beneath them are azaleas, lily-of-the-valley and ferns. This section of the walled garden is best seen during the months of February and March.

There are many wonderful old-fashioned azaleas located in the garden which must be written about at some other time. However, Mrs. Roth mentioned that the use of Azalea 'Hinodegiri' was a matter of trial and error. In the beginning many plants were tried which the deer ate or which died due to wrong exposure. It was discovered early that the deer do not seem to eat this particular cultivar. Also, it was discovered that very few azaleas were able to survive in certain locations because of the severe afternoon sun from the west. Azalea 'Ward's Ruby' was found to be able to take the difficult situation of exposure. There are beautiful drifts of red of both 'Hinodegiri' and 'Ward's Ruby' in combination through the garden, and they are somewhat electric in total effect. Finding the adaptable plant became the answer for creating unusual effects as well!

The present charm and color of the garden are due to the continuing care which Mrs. Roth has given for the past forty years. Approximately half of the flowering shrubs in the garden were added by Mrs. Roth, some under the guidance of Bella Worn and some selected with the aid of Toichi Domoto.

The garden is a chronicle of the people involved and their interests and aspirations. Many old plants have been replaced because they have reached mature size and have declined in vigor or have become too large for the spaces they originally filled. This process of replacement is essential to continuing health and interest in the gardens at Filoli. Many new varieties were added and will continue to be added to replace older plants. The cycle of growth — youth, maturity and old age — show up in a garden and must be expected as part of the natural ordering of life.

Filoli is one of the few old large estate gardens in California still intact which has retained its original design and has been maintained. There are very few private gardens left of this period which contain mature old plantings so well maintained. Now that it is a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and will be run by a public foundation for purposes horticultural and other, it will be interesting to see what happens to the plants in another thirty years. Their continued use for experimentation, education and enjoyment by greater numbers of people is Mrs. Roth's hope.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The Filoli Gardens comprise one of the finest horticultural displays in the San Francisco Bay area. William E. Schmidt (no stranger to the pages of this *Journal*) assumed the task of assembling the story of these famous gardens, and he tells about the authors assigned by him to write of the Gardens, in the following notes:

In 1969 Mrs. William P. Roth, generous patron of horticulture and owner of Filoli, gave permission for several visits each, by the three authors to gather material for the articles on Filoli in this issue of the *Journal*. All three were already acquainted with the large and beautiful estate near Woodside, in San Mateo County, California, for each had enjoyed the grounds a number of times during official visits stretching back many years. Nevertheless, each author went to the estate several times, in the fall of 1969 and the spring of 1970, to check details for his assigned part of the Filoli story.

Albert Wilson gives us a personalized account describing the landscaped areas and the exotic plants at Filoli. He, also, has written other articles for the *Journal*, as well as for garden magazines and newspapers. Mr. Wilson's best known book is one for home gardeners — *How Does Your Garden Grow?* He is well known as a garden lecturer and demonstrator, teaches several classes on gardening and appears on KGO-TV in San Francisco and on the educational station, Channel 14.

Roxana S. Ferris, who describes some of the native plants at Filoli, is Emeritus Curator of the Dudley Herbarium at Stanford University. While there she wrote Volume IV of the *Illustrated Flora of The Pacific States*. Two years ago the University of California Press published her illustrated booklet *Native Shrubs of the San Francisco Bay Region* and recently Mrs. Ferris completed the illustrated *Flowers of the Point Reyes National Seashore*, to be released by the U. C. Press this year.

Charles J. Burr wrote the historical account of Filoli; he has, in past years, written other articles for the *Journal*, as well as for nursery trade magazines and San Francisco newspapers. Mr. Burr is a wholesale nurseryman with a wide knowledge of the stock grown in west coast nurseries. In 1966 he and Mrs. Burr traveled in southern Ireland and specially sought out Muckross Castle and gardens, now an Irish National Trust. Muckross was once owned by William B. Bourn, who first established Filoli.

WM. E. SCHMIDT, *Guest Editor*

Ray Collett, at the University of California at Santa Cruz, author of the interesting story of the musk plant, printed in our January, 1970 issue, tells us now of the interesting native plants found on the new university campus. Echoing his thought, we hope that these plants will continue to exist there for a long, long time.

Your editor has, for a number of years, endeavored to find someone who would write of the beauties to be found in rhododendron leaves. A number of experts considered the project, but turned it down. Feeling that the story is of horticultural interest, we (the editorial we) finally undertook the task and hope that you will agree that it is of sufficient interest for these pages.

(Continued on Page 112)

The Gardens of Filoli

ALBERT WILSON, Palo Alto

(NOTE: Capital letters in parentheses refer to letters on plan, p. 81.)

It was 1927 and I was fresh out of Stanford when I heard, from my boss, of the gardens of Filoli as a place where I could sell a big order of plants. But I forgot my mission in admiration. Here, I said to myself, waxing poetic in my youth, the gold of Grass Valley (for that is where the owners got it) has been magically transmuted into a finer metal. It was fall-time, in the early afternoon. As my jalopy crept through the gate, raising no dust, I noticed first a parade of turkeys stepping high among the stubble. It was a big, sunny, golden field stretching westward to a heavy wall of oaks where the land rose to the foothills. The tradesmen's road beckoned me onward to the oaks; there, suddenly, was a short utility bridge across a tiny stream. And on the bank were deer, siesta-ing against the autumn heat. It was not they, as old residents, who studied the scene, but myself, as an invading stranger. Beyond the bridge the road became a tunnel of shadow under the oaks; thence, promptly, I was out in the blaze of sunlight, alongside an open courtyard busy with activities.

A man went by pushing a wheelbarrow full of soil; two were loading potted chrysanthemums in a station wagon; in the glasshouse a rubber-booted youth passed the open door pulling a hose; and I heard a raucous call from what seemed to be a parrot. He was, as I learned, announcing my arrival.

"I'm out here to see Mr. Phil Graves," I said, announcing my own arrival. "That's me," answered a man who looked every inch the boss. "But who are you? You're a new one — where do you come from?"

"I'm from the nursery on El Camino in Menlo Park. This is a new place to me," I said, "and my name is Albert Wilson."

"Come along with me," he answered. "I'm just beginning the rounds." Instead of the repelling scowls which so often meet with such intrusions as I had to make, I got a fatherly grin and a run of enthusiastic talk. I could scarcely believe it. This man actually loved to teach. He took pride in his domain.

"You understand," he said, "this is an estate." This I was quite willing to accept, for I could see a great sweep of gardens and parks. "We have thirty-five acres of land here at work, seventeen acres fenced, and twenty men to work it. Right ahead, beyond this hedge, are the panels for cut flowers and vegetables."

I had seen specimen hollies (*Ilex aquifolium*), but never a hedge like this. It was shoulder high — I had to stand on tiptoe to look over it, while the happy, tall Mr. Graves had no such need. The hedge was immaculately groomed and the berries were already reddening. We walked the path westward along its four hundred feet of length. I figured in my mind how much labor it would cost me to keep it in that condition.

"You'll notice we have come up a few feet along this hedge," Mr. Graves explained. "But the main slope that we are on is northward down to the lake, two miles away. We'll just look at panels today and leave the wall garden beyond for the next time. But first, let's see the observation garden, the highest point of all."

When the hedge ended we stepped up, turned left and followed the slope upward, along a grass-carpeted alley between trees and into an amphitheatre, outlined by stone pillars carrying Chinese wisteria vines (*Wisteria sinensis*), backed up by young, vigorous Lombardy poplars (*Populus nigra* 'Italica'). This was a lookout. We could see the length of the alley. The

trees defining it on either side were yews (*Taxus baccata* 'Stricta'). The owner, my guide told me, himself brought them as seed from Ireland. They were half-grown and plainly showed their spacing with intervals between. Outside were fruit trees growing with scaffold branches horizontal against wired fences supported by sturdy iron poles. I recall vividly how appetizing the red apples and the cling peaches looked on these frames; and looking at those real masterpieces of fruit culture after the French espalier style, I felt certain that my Stanford learning was being broadened and deepened. Then, after I had absorbed this effect, Mr. Graves had me look forward down the alley. "You can see the wall of the Wall Garden (G), the three Italian stone pines (*Pinus pinea*) standing above it; the big iron gate through it; and you can get a glimpse of the great house beyond a sprawling oak tree. In the far distance you can see a patch of blue water—that is a lake two miles away."

The lawn was used as the way to walk down the alley. It was a succession of short levels, separated by brick treads to take us down the slope. The grass carpet was thick, dark green and beautifully manicured, and free of dandelions. It looked like hard, conscientious, unremitting work, and in later times when I was designing gardens myself and knowing how essential the lawn is in them, I often referred to this as an ideal.

"This carpet," Mr. Graves told me, "is fed several times a year. Wind is a problem, and we have to pour on the water." The black yews along the west side cast strong shadows, making bars across the lush grass.

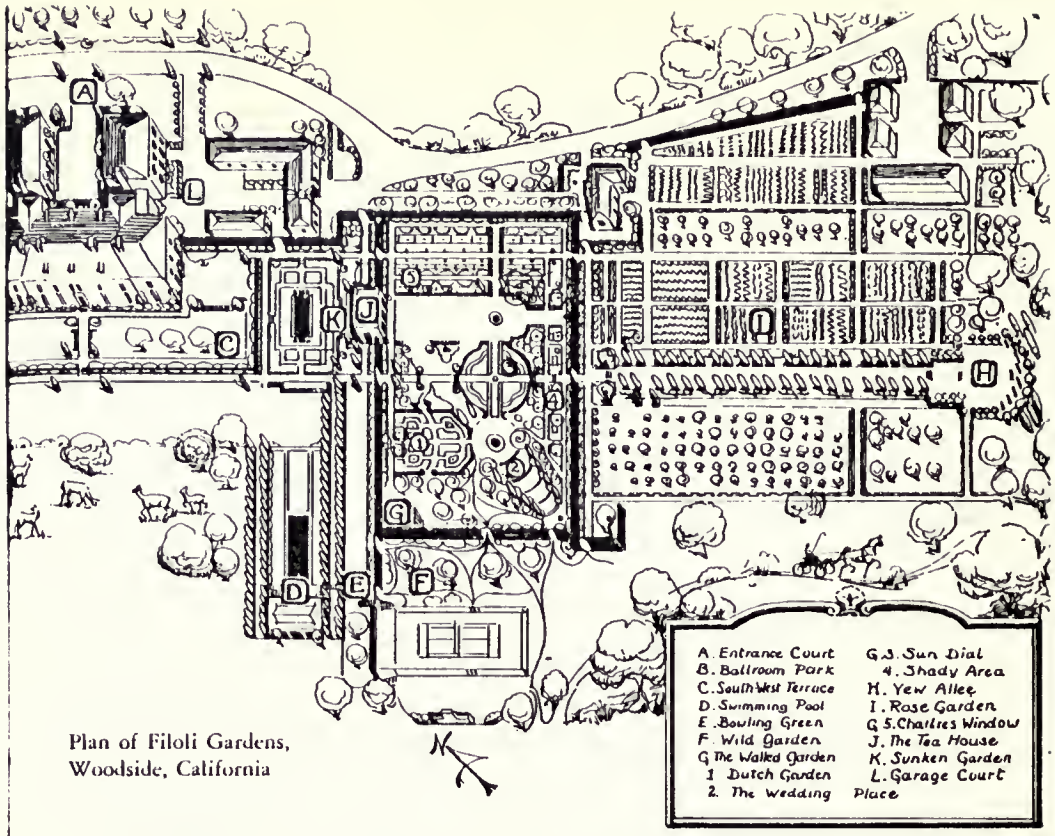
Between the yews I kept seeing orchard trees along the west side. The trunks were all whitewashed, the scaffolds strong and vigorous. It was a family orchard of assorted fruits. I of some gardener to keep it in order.

In fact, this area pushed out to the hill slope and must have required removal of heavily growing trees and other native flora. It was what we might call a geometric simplicity replacing poetic confusion. But musing over this thought I asked myself, "Why not, in the name of culture and civilization?"

The yew alley with its green carpet came to an end at a lower, wide brick platform surrounded by trees of a different kind. "Here, young fellow," said Mr. Graves, "Let's see if, with all your schooling, you can tell me what these trees are?" They were much taller than the yews, and I was first looking skyward, and then all the way down their trunks. Luckily I happened to have seen one in Golden Gate Park under the guidance of Alice Eastwood. So I cockily answered, "Hornbeam!" (*Carpinus caroliniana*). Mr. Graves gave me a hard, puzzled look.

Beyond the platform was the Walled Garden and grand gate which was its entry. Along the wall to the west and east was a gravel walk. We took the east turn and again the slope was gradually downward. Attached to the wall were more espaliered fruits. Between them and the walk, and also on the other side of the walk, were spaced redwood stakes where, Mr. Graves said, dwarf pear trees, due to be delivered from Oregon, were to go. A powerful, leathery-faced gardener was already digging holes twenty-four inches deep, with square corners. "Such meticulous preparation," I said to myself. "Am I not proud to belong to such a profession!"

We were passing the west end of the panel gardens: roses, perennials and annuals were growing in cutting beds. These neat beds were edged with block-trimmed boxwood. Those farther south, Mr. Graves told me, were edged with shrubs such as flowering quince (*Chaenomeles japonica*) Rose (*Weigela florida*), forsythia (*Forsythia intermedia*), all for cutting. A lovely, clipped hedge of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is a very important feature of this part of the garden. And the whole area was busy with gardeners taking up old plants and putting in new ones. Flowers were cut every day or so.



Plan of Filoli Gardens, Woodside, California

We moved along the wall and finally toward the south for a short distance along the far side of the panels, and then east again past a panel of flowering trees, also used for cutting. Among them were flowering peaches (*Prunus persica*), flowering dwarf almond (*Prunus glandulosa*) and flowering crab apples. I had often seen whole station wagons full of flowers being taken to parties, church festivals and hospitals, and this partly explained where they came from, thus again furthering my Stanford education.

We turned south between these flowering trees and the vegetable garden, which intrigued me by the variety back toward the glass house, Mr. Graves' office and my car. I saw annuals — tomatoes, zucchini, squash, onions, pumpkins, parsley, etc., and perennials, such as artichokes, rhubarb and horse radish. The path was bordered on that side by old-fashioned lavender.

"These plants," said Mr. Graves, "thrive only where conditions suit them; we don't try to persuade them what they should want. They tell us. Look and you will see that the cabbage, broccoli and chard are on the cool side, where long shadows take away the late afternoon sun. But did you know, my boy, that if I did that to lettuce it would go to starch instead of sugar and come out bitter. And how would the folks in the great house then address yours truly?"

Across the vegetable garden to the east I could see a high, southwest-facing wall, fronted with fig trees to take the warmth of the afternoon sun.

this wall paralleled our path nearly all the way. It closed in that side of the main growing area.

"This is enough for today. Come next week and I'll make another try at you." When I got into my jalopy, alone, I realized I had forgotten even to make a try at selling him anything.

On my next visit, also in the early afternoon, Mr. Graves right away pointed to the wall and explained that it was high enough to keep out the deer; and that either such a wall or a deer proof fence had to surround the whole seventeen acres of cultivated area. We now took off northward, outside the wall, along the access road. We were in the oak tunnel until we burst out into full sunshine. A wall of tree-sized vigorous camellias (*Camellia japonica*) lined the road to the left, under partial shade from oaks beyond. I was astonished at their size and the lavish use to which they were put. Above these oaks I got a glimpse of the high-domed, golden clock tower surmounted by a weather vane. This, to my astonishment, proved to be the garage, and it must, in earlier years, have been the barn.

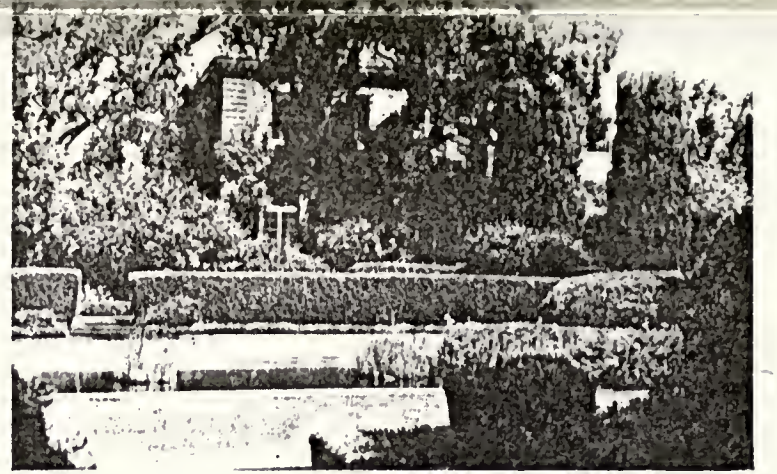
Farther along the wall came a fine, huge, evergreen oak, benevolently sheltering, with its great, spreading branches, the shade lovers, Japanese cherries (*Prunus serrulata*), Hinoki cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*), woodwardia ferns (*Woodwardia chamissoi*), *Acanthus mollis,* and a scattering of foxgloves and *Francoa ramosa.* Out in full sunlight was an evergreen magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), where, surrounded by grass, it would get plenty of water.

The road curved eastward leaving a space for lawn between it and the wall. It continued to the service entrance turn-off, along which were Irish yews and pollarded sycamores, and to the entrance gate marking the end of the wall. We now proceeded along the road to the main entrance (L).

It was my first full view of the mansion, the vital center and reason for all the teeming industry around it. It is two-storied and massive, of pleasing brick color, set off with white columns dressed with wisteria and clematis (*Clematis montana*). At the entrance itself, on the landing supporting the pillars, were tubs of large-leaved aralias (*Fatsia japonica*). Potted plants stood below for color.

The court was gravelled; it partly closed in the main entrance from the road by a wide, blocky boxwood hedge (*Buxus sempervirens*) and farther in it was edged with dwarf boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'). Outside, on both sides, men were working and Mr. Graves became all business, for they were putting in plants for the next season. These were going under the established foundation planting: Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*), daphne (*Daphne odora*), the Burkwood viburnum (*Viburnum* × *burkwoodii*), the tobira shrub (*Pittosporum tobira*) in the dark corner, and two nicely shaped Van Tol hollies. These hollies are often called Dutch hollies by nurserymen. Their leaves are characterized by but a few spines and the plants display masses of red berries every season. All of this complimented the white pillars. A camellia, masses of evergreen azaleas, a fragrant Kashmir bouquet (*Clerodendrum bungei*) and the Boston ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*) covered the base of the brickwork. A young *Magnolia campbelli* grew in a sunny area here. (A)

We now went back to the main entrance and continued along the road. The house lawn continued along the left, or west, side; on the right was a strip of good, green grass, edged beyond by prostrate junipers (*Juniperus chinensis* 'Japonica') growing over a low brick retaining wall, beyond which the ground fell away. The slope was gradual down to the creek, and it bore a grove of gray European olives (*Olea europaea*) standing, beautifully cared for, in their ploughed ground. Farther along, the road turned sharply eastward and another brick retaining wall, marking the north boundary of the mansion area, ran westward. On this wall was an ornate balustrade of dressed stone, continuously capped, supporting vines and shrubs: Chilean guava (*Ugni molinae*), bearing a large crop of edible berries (which appealed to my sense of economy), the genuinely red Manuka tea tree (*Leptospermum scoparium*), wisteria, golden eleagnus (*Elaeagnus pungens* 'Maculata'), a large, beautifully-grown tobira that was variegated (*Pittosporum tobira* 'Variegata'), Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolia*), full of berries, and the fragrant sarcococca (*Sarcococca ruscifolia*), which already had become large-sized. (B).



The Residence, across the Sunken Garden

Photo by Owen Pearce

Along the mansion side of the wall were astonishingly big oaks—California live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) of unusual girth, in a line as though planted. We surmised that their location had actually controlled the placing of the mansion. The oaks were just right to soften and decorate the wide and lofty expanse of brick. On the downhill side were other big oaks and planted blue Atlas cedars (*Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca'). Wishing to appear prophetic and alert, I offered Mr. Graves the thought these would in time grow to be giants.

"Sure they will. We'll see that they do by giving them all the water they can drink. It's free around here, you know. The man of the house owns those lakes."

There was a piece of lawn under the cedars, and the blue of the cedar was enhanced by the green of the grass; the colors seemed magical to me. The whole effect of the slope to east and north was that of a park.

The walk outside the wall brought us to a stop, where we could see the north sweep which the family has so long enjoyed. In the foreground, down on the sunny plain, were deer grazing like cattle; and above the distant trees was the turquoise sparkle of water. Here we felt even more certainly that the mansion had been consciously fitted to its locale by strong, perceptive taste.

(C) Mr. Graves sat me down on a bench where I could look at the mansion itself. I wondered for a moment if he was planning to sell it to me, so evident was his enthusiasm. The absence of big trees let us see more of it in the bright sunlight than before, and he called my attention to the wisteria decorating a shallow re-

entrant. It had been trained, not to twine around, but to grow straight up to reach a wrought iron balcony. I wondered how the plant liked this discipline but kept this valuable thought to myself. Whatever the mood of the plant, the result for me was novel and exquisite; for the lateral spurs developed systematically all the way—the long, decorative, gray-green pods hung in full view and the yellow colors of autumn were already beginning to come out.

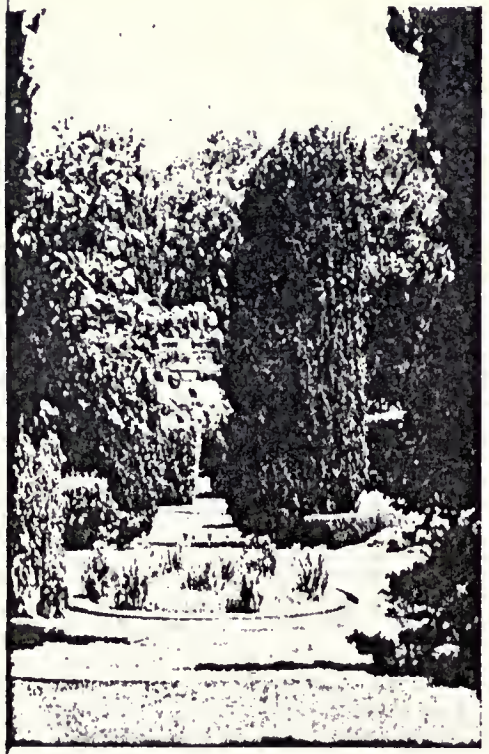
The balustrade retaining wall here turned south along the west border of the mansion area, carrying more wisteria, rockspray cotoneaster, (*Cotoneaster microphylla*), *Juniperus* 'Pfitzeriana,' jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*), daphne, lily of the Nile (*Agapanthus umbellatus*), dwarf pomegranates (*Punica granatum* 'Nanum'), lantana, golden arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis* 'Aurea'), *Eugenia apiculata,* azaleas and boxwood, all kept low so as not to block out the distant view. Beyond and below was a wide lawn and this was bordered by one of those high deer-proof fences enriched with plant material. It occurred to me that these charming creatures would really be pests if they should amble into the drawing room!

A row of Yews
Photo by Owen Pearce

Inside the wall we looked south from our bench along a wide panel of lawn, bordered by a long brick walk which ran along the foundation planting of the house. We followed it. I saw English yews, camellias, fuchsia species, two banana shrubs (*Michelia figo*) on either side of the door, Carolina cherry laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*), plumbago (*Plumbago capensis*), privet (*Ligustrum japonicum* 'Rotundifolium') and Boston ivy again climbing on the brick. All along the walk the foundation planting was edged with low boxwood. The windows were arched, and half way along one of the arches contained the West Door; opposite it, beyond our walk, was a slate-paved terrace, decorated with aromatic herbs placed far enough apart to leave plenty of room. This was a famous viewing place, for over the balustrade well, and as a kind of frame, stood two Hinoki cypresses (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*), and *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Nana' at a break in the wall.

"Young fellow," Mr. Graves said, "You couldn't guess that pair of trees have been great travellers. *They came from the Panama-Pacific Exposition of 1915.*" He then gave me a strong look as though to see whether I was properly moved by such a prodigy of history. "And tell me, what are those ground cover shrubs at their bases?" I said, "I see prostrate juniper, of course, and cotoneasters."

"Juniper yes, but *prostrate* cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster microphylla*)." From the terrace a walk led between the trees through the wall and down to the lawn below.



The Wedding Place in the Walled Garden
Photo by Owen Pearce

Continuing along the house, the lawn carried several fine evergreen oaks. We finally turned around the house corner into the dining room terrace, which was paved with slate. This was shaded by as big an evergreen oak as I had ever seen. Its top dwarfed the house and its branches fingered the tile roof and spread its shadow far beyond the terrace in the other direction. With the oaks which we had seen at the diagonally opposite corner of the house it made a controlling axis which would have been evident from an airplane, had there been one above in those days.

As we entered, there was a high, brick-benched wall along the far side, holding a potted Mandarin orange (Dancy tangerine), Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Ornatum') and a dwarf pomegranate. The Mandarin pot was broad-rimmed and golden, with

"When we want to splash it on, we add the seasonals: azaleas, cinerarias, poor man's orchid and the cherry tomato," commented Mr. Graves. And he looked at me hard again, and this time I couldn't divine the reason. At least there was plenty more to wonder at, especially when it flashed to my mind how I would feel if, by some miracle, I could dine there myself. Enjoying the oak-given partial shade around the other tree sides were daphne, rhododendron, English laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) and aralia. At the base of the oak was a mass planting of red fibrous begonias.

Our balustrade wall had turned east and, in its continuation, made the south wall of the dining room terrace, where it ended at stairs to the right. A few steps from here was the Sunken Garden in a flood of sunshine; and along the middle was a panel-shaped pool for gold fish and water lilies. It was bordered by trimmed-down olives, prostrate junipers and apricot-flowered oleanders, and all was made accessible and visible by a shoreline walk. It was

The Italian Stone Pines *(Pinus pinea)*
Photo by Owen Pearce

planned for solitude; for along the balustrade wall between the dining room terrace and this sunken area was a screen of trumpet vine (*Tecomaria capensis*), redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*), showing a few soft pink flowers, climbing rose, wisteria, dwarf apple (*Malus* sp.) and Indian hawthorn (*Raphiolepis indica*). This made the garden invisible from above and you had to come down into it to know it was there. I imagined myself alone there in pensive circumnavigation around and around.

After this, Mr. Graves started for the Wall Garden, immediately to the south, so closed on all sides as to shut out access and vision from nearly two acres of ground. As we entered through the west gate, he stopped abruptly and pulled me back.

"That big man over there in the wheel chair out in the sun is the owner. You can see him, but don't ever let him see you," said Mr. Graves.

"That's sad," I whispered. "Don't be too sure of that, my boy; he's as clear and full of ideas as ever. He can't walk around but he can think and plan better than any of us."

So that day he took me westward between the bowling green and the wall, which was covered with variegated ivy (*Hedera helix* 'Arborescens') and supported, or backed, by lofty sycamore trees, pollarded London planes. There the green ended near two young Camperdown elms and we turned through the gate to the Wild Garden. Permitted to grow free and loose, as though distributed by nature, these were not California natives, but "exotics." The contrast of green was delightful and it was modified in the oak tree shade. There was enough management here to create a pleasing liaison between the strongly formal arrangements I had been looking at for hours and the free and accidental beauty of the wild hill slopes. (E) and (F)

It was the next spring when I got back into the Wall Garden. Everything was in flower and the amount of work represented there made me feel weary. We stood on the terrace before the Tea House; I shall give the reader an impression of what I saw from there, and shall abridge the plantings.

To the left, along the east wall, were panels of spring-flowering shrubs, a lengthwise walk with tree roses on either side, and boxwood-bordered beds filled with colorful annuals. Paralleling these panels and crossing directly to the south wall was a broad panel of lawn terminating at the wall in a tall urn in the midst of the stone pine shade area containing camellias, azaleas, clivias, agapanthus and magnificent cinerarias.

Near the middle of the whole garden was the Sun Dial, surrounded by a formal mass planting of violas and white tulips. On the diagonal to the southwest corner we looked between two blocks of bay trees (*Laurus nobilis*) and yews; and saw beyond what was called the Wedding Place. This was an upward slope bearing four contour walls covered with creeping figs (*Ficus pumila*) and holding four grass terraces. At the top was a pilaster holding up a bird bath in the corner of the wall. On either side was a crowd of weeping cherries, Japanese maples and redbuds (*Cercis occidentalis*) and *Azalea* 'Hinodigiri,' many in full flower. (G)

For these memories I have had the benefit of notes and photographs. Filoli was then seventeen years old. Now it is sixty; its marks of time are not of age but of growth. The young trees of those earlier days have grown up, some to gigantic size, especially the Italian stone pines, the yews and ginkgos (*Ginkgo biloba*). The very rare *Nothofagus solandri* from New Zealand is the best I have seen. After the second great war, two dawn redwoods (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) came in; they are already forty feet tall. A swimming pool has moved in between the rows of fine yews. The original plan still lives.

AN INTERVIEW WITH TOICHI DOMOTO

Conducted by
Suzanne Riess
in 1981

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TABLE OF CONTENTS -- Toichi Domoto

I DOMOTO BROTHERS NURSERY
Customers
Japanese Gardeners
Bulb Salesmen
The Persimmon
Quarantine Number 37
Cottage Garden Nursery, Eureka

II TOICHI DOMOTO'S EDUCATION
Jobs for Japanese
Stanford, and University of Illinois
Cosmopolitan Club
Tom Domoto, Propagating and Hybridizing Chrysanthemums

III FILOLI, POST WORLD WAR II
Bulbs
Toichi, Troubleshooter

IV MISS ISABELLA WORN

V APPRECIATING THE CHARACTER OF GARDENS

VI TEACHING THE SKILLS; FLORICULTURE SCHOOLS

VII ITALIAN GARDENERS

VIII PRUNING AT FILOLI

I DOMOTO BROTHERS NURSERY

[Interview 1: May 26, 1981]##

Riess: Yours is the name that always comes up in relation to Filoli, no other supplier.

Domoto: The other ones that were supplying services there--did Mrs. Roth mention, while I think about it, a tree service man from Davey?

Riess: No, they used Davey?

Domoto: I think he was connected with Davey or they may not have used Davey, but he was a Davey-trained man, let's put it that way, and I think he lives in Palo Alto. We can supplement if I find out because this man was probably advising them along in the fifties, I guess. I don't think before that. There was someone else before [Leslie] Thiringer.

Riess: [Louis] Moraconi?

Domoto: No, Moraconi is [not it]. He was the last of the--there was another--

Riess: Do you mean as head gardener?

Domoto: Head gardener, yes. Moraconi was in charge of the Italian group there, more or less in the bedding plant group, but as far as I remember, I don't think he was in charge of the full yard area.

Customers

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended.

Domoto: We supplied--my father's nursery, Domoto Brothers, Inc., and Toichi Domoto Nursery--plants to Filoli long before I got to meet Mrs. Roth, because it went through Miss Worn. A lot of it Miss Worn would pick up in her own truck and take it on down.

Riess: So you were sort of wholesaling to Miss Worn?

Domoto: Miss Worn, yes, and not knowing where they were going, just like a lot of the plants she was buying went to the Hearst estate at San Simeon, and after she bought them, "Well, this is going to the Hearst estate." Her idea when she was dealing with my dad--see, Dad was the old school: if he knew that someone wealthy was going to buy it, maybe the price would go up! [laughs]

Riess: Really, that is the old school? That sounds like the new school, too, I'm sure!

Domoto: I've forgotten who the Piedmont customer was that came down one day in an old car. Dad said, "What is the matter? Did your other car break down?" He said, "No, I thought if I came in this car, you would give me a better price!" [laughter] Those were the days of the Pierce Arrows and the Locomobiles--that was a prestige car in those days. If they came in a Pierce Arrow, you know that they had the wealth to go with it.

Riess: But plant materials seemed very, very cheap then. Is it relative or were they very cheap?

Domoto: No, good materials were still high. Yet as far as it was cheap in the point of view of the dollar, but then you figure out a person working all day is only getting a dollar.

Riess: Yes, but in this article, when the maples were 35 cents and a hundred for $35.

Domoto: Yes, but you are only getting a dollar a day.

Riess: But your trade was not the dollar a day trade.

Japanese Gardeners

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* "Toichi Domoto, Nurseryman," by William E. Schmidt, California Horticultural Journal, Vol. XXX, No. 3, July 1969.

Domoto: No, but your help--that means your economy is at that point, so that your trade and everything, they are thinking in those terms. We have the trouble right now even, the older generation, they will say, "Hey, Domoto, find me a good Japanese gardener or a gardener who knows something about it."

I say, "Yes, I can find you one probably, but I won't promise you anything."

"Oh, I get gardeners but they don't know anything."

I say, "The ones that know are going to cost you some money."

He says, "How much?" Well, they are used to thinking in terms of the prewar or postwar when their gardeners, they got two and a half or three dollars an hour they thought they were paying them a good price. Now if a gardener charges him six to ten dollars for just pushing the lawn mower they think they are getting robbed. Yet they will go to the garage or a plumber--

Riess: Oh sure, but we know we're getting robbed by the plumber! [laughs] But actually there are gardeners and gardeners. I mean if it is just going to be mowing the lawn, then would you expect that gardener to know plant materials?

Domoto: They should, but unfortunately they don't. Too many of the young ones that have gone in either are of a group that had no other openings and went in for gardening either because economy-wise or else--I hate to put it this way--mentally they are not sufficient enough to do anything else but pushing the lawn mower.

Riess: You are saying this is almost traditionally the case?

Domoto: No, the original Japanese gardener that came here, they had nothing that they could go into that was better. So I would say that their I.Q., if such a thing can be measured, was higher and not only that, I think their interest was a lot more intense because their livelihood depended on being able to keep that job. You don't have a welfare state to depend on. If they didn't get that job, they would have to go back [to Japan]. They can't say, "I'm hungry. I need an extra few dollars for my family." There was nothing like that.

Riess: What was your father like? A real entrepreneur it sounds like.

Domoto: Yes, and then I think of what they did. We talk about the older--the second--generation, those that did make a name for themselves, when we think back to what they did, why, I don't think any of us would have had the guts to do what they did or the way they did it. They were really gamblers.

Riess: Was the community very supportive when your father took the risk of starting the nursery?

Domoto: No, no, they were really anti. They had to buck everything. It was the only way.

Riess: Was there a Japanese community already?

Domoto: No, when my father came there was no Japanese community, just a small [group], very small in 1883.

Riess: So he took a risk at the beginning.

Domoto: Yes. Most of the plants that came were unknown here. The fact that plants were coming in from Japan, [there was] interest in plants from Japan, and then the plants from Europe, probably the salesmen from those countries were good and that is the way they came in, started in.

Bulb Salesmen

Riess: I wondered how he got his connections with the bulb dealers in Holland.

Domoto: The Hollanders used to send their salesmen over every year and it used to be quite a thing. Each bulb company would try to send their bulb salesman in. They were supposed to leave at about the same time. Of course, there were no planes. There were boats and, of course, there could only be a certain number of boats coming in. Then the Transcontinental and the Pacific Coast, there was a race to see who was going to hit the market first. They know which of the growers buy the most bulbs, so they will try to hit him first and see if they can get the bulk of the bulb order. That was the race for the Dutch bulbs.

The plant business before quarantine was mostly not so much Hollanders but the Belgians.

Riess: That was the azaleas?

Domoto: The azaleas, English bays, Araucarias, they were all grown trees. They would come in by boat to New York and then come overland by freight all crated up and then they would uncrate them and they would use them like in the front of the Palace Hotel, the Fairmont Hotel in those days, some hotels even bigger--most of the hotels, very few apartments, and even the private residences would all have these--you see in some of the old pictures these Bay trees, Laurus nobilis, those were the standards or pyramids. They came all ready in these cedar tubs, already grown.

Riess: At that point, your father had his catalogue?

Domoto: Yes, he had put out a catalogue earlier. They were sort of an import catalogue and evidently what they did was, the orders were taken against the import stock and as the stock came in, the orders were filled. In the fall of the season when they came in, the orders would be filled as they arrived. So actually, my father's letterhead used to read "importers and exporters."

The Persimmon

Domoto: A lot of the things he did [was] import work, mail order. For instance, the things that came in any quantity were like persimmons, chestnuts, some of the fruit trees, like the pears, but mainly the biggest amount of that type of fruit was some of the varieties of persimmons and some of the prunes. Then even they bought some of the oranges, the Satsuma oranges. In the other ornamental line, we would get quantities of camellias.

Riess: Let me stop you for a second on the fruit and ask whether this was the introduction here of Japanese persimmons?

Domoto: Oh yes.

Riess: Through your father's business?

Domoto: Yes. They were sold to other nurseries like, oh, Fancher Creek, in Fresno. There is a nursery up in Newcastle, Fowler, I think. Those are some of the nurseries. Then down south into the Los Angeles area. Actually, I guess the commercial--others may have imported some, I don't know. But I know that my father was importing a lot of those original persimmons into the states for distribution.

Riess: For home gardens?

Domoto: No, for commercial planters. So some of the original plantings in California were from trees that my father imported.

Riess: Did they know the range of conditions that the persimmon would grow under?

Domoto: No, a lot of it was experimental. But by that time some of the orchardists had Japanese foremen or men working for them on the crew. So because of that they would know about planting, but a lot of it was experimental. Then also the USDA was interested in the persimmons, like they were in bamboo shoots--bamboo we imported.

Up at Chico, they had I have forgotten how many varieties of persimmon at the USDA Experiment Station. They had pretty near every variety of persimmon they could find from Japan as a test to try out for the area and at one time, the ones that came from Japan originally were all grafted on persimmons understock. Then they found out somewhere along the line that the persimmon understock takes too long to come into fruit and it was hard to transplant. So then they went into a cousin, one they called the lotus, a related tree for understock here in California. Now they are going back to the persimmon again because they say that the lotus is not really compatible, the tree is short-lived and the fruit isn't quite as good. So they are going back to the older persimmon understock again.

But Chico, and this is back in it must have been in the fifties. It was before that, I guess. I know that some of those trees may still be there. They had one large persimmon that the man in charge (I've forgotten his name now) said that they just had finished picking over a half a ton of fruit from that one tree.

Riess: That's amazing. I have a persimmon and the trunk is so weak that I have to keep cutting that tree back.

Domoto: No, this trunk goes about that wide. I don't know what the spread was, but they got the big fruit from there, and every year since they've been up there--the heads of the department used to be shifted around from different stations--they said they were sending a box to the President, and boxes to the secretaries of agriculture and commerce. I said, "Do you mean all of those?" "Oh no, not all of them, but certain ones." Then, of course, no air. It had to be shipped by railway express and it would be at least five days on the road--at least that; more likely a week. They were really--I never saw them that big. Of course, they would pick out the biggest ones.

Riess: Oh, and they are so beautiful. Then they would have to send along somebody to educate all of these people about when you eat a persimmon, when it's ripe.

Domoto: Probably over there, when they got them they would probably look at them and then, of course, they have a Japanese embassy, or the consulate people that they could find out what to do with them, or else probably they just came with somebody to look at it, admire or have some fun puckering them.

Speaking of educating, I was in Illinois in school and my folks sent me some persimmons, both Fuyus and Hachiyas. My roommate, when the box came in, I didn't recognize the Fuyus right away and I started to bite into it (and I had a few Hachiyas in the box). He said, "What are those?"

I said, "Persimmons."

He kept watching my face and he said, "Toichi, you are a damn good actor but you can't fool me!"

I said, "Okay," and I kept eating one. When I got through, he said, "No, there is something else to it. Can I try one?"

I said, "Sure." He bit into it, and pretty soon he sort of laughed. Then one of the other fraternity brothers came in and he said, "What are you eating?"

"Persimmons."

"Ooh!"

"Yes," I said, "do you want to try one?"

"Nah! It's too good for those guys!" [laughter]

But that was the general impression of persimmons and even now it is that way. Persimmons are puckery and if you grow up eating persimmons back there it is the small, native persimmons, the wild persimmons. They say that they have to be real ripe before they are good. Of course, the southern group, they know what they're talking about. They eat persimmons with possum meat cooked together. So it's just a matter of getting educated.

Riess: The experimental work was done by the USDA. How about the University of California Agricultural Extension?

Domoto: No, that is a much later development. That importation work was mostly done by USDA first. Then they had one down in Santa Barbara, too, but they closed that out back in about '35 or '40 when they had to enlarge one of the campuses. They had to knock out a lot of the trees they had there. But they were experimenting with some in Florida, too. The two experiment stations were in Florida and Chico, and some of the early pamphlets or early books on persimmons that the USDA has put out, is from either Chico or Florida. Just like the bamboo. See, they had an idea of growing bamboo for food and also for structural purposes especially in the Louisiana area. But with labor costs and whatever it was too costly.

Quarantine Number 37

Riess: When was the quarantine?

Domoto: That was in '17. But actually there was an embargo before that because the war was on and there was no space available for bringing the plants in. So the actual quarantine, number 37, did not go into effect until '17. But the limitation of imports was already on because of the war. The only way you could get their coming into the States either from the Orient or from Europe was by getting a special permit from the War Trade Board to use the boats coming this way if they had room, and that was very limited.

Then because 37 was going to go in, the nurserymen here were just coming out of World War I and still trying to cope with their home propagation. They were trying to keep [out] the competition that would be coming in from Europe or Asia or wherever that used to come in, that is to work up a home industry in the meantime.

Riess: Are you talking about the non-Japanese nurserymen?

Domoto: Yes, all over the United States; that is, azaleas and conifers and so forth back in the New Jersey area and the New York area and some in California. Not so much in the Midwest--one or two in the Midwest. But it was an industry and they were trying to keep the competition from coming in. Of course, there was a fear of insects and diseases coming in.

Riess: Which do you think was more important though? Which was the real issue?

Domoto: When I come to think back over what happened and the way things are, politics as it is, I would say [pause]--they used the fact that there was a danger of disease coming in as a means of putting quarantine 37 in.

Riess: Yes, I would imagine you would think that. Was there enough warning though so that you could get a really adequate back stock?

Domoto: No, because if you did, then they would say, "Look, disease could come in with that box of stock." So they wanted control over the stock that was coming in already, that would be coming in under the quarantine, so they would have control over that. They had to be brought in and inspected, or come from a country where they had rigid inspection, and then come in for resale. Certain things could be resold right away, others would have to be kept under one or two or three-year post-entry quarantine measures to see if nothing develops on those plants that came in.

Cottage Garden Nursery, Eureka

Domoto: Now, that's where Cottage Garden Nursery in Eureka started. My father, being on the importing side, import licenses--special licenses--were hard to get. Mr. [Charles W.] Ward told my father, "You go to Japan and get all of these. You want so many thousand of this, so many thousand of that, and this and that, all of the things that we are importing in whatever size you could get, the bigger the better; whatever you could get."

[My father] said, "We can't get that permit." He said, "Never mind the permit. I'll get the permit and you go to Japan and get the plants over there."

Riess: Because he had the political power to get the permit?

Domoto: Yes.

Riess: His name was Ward?

Domoto: Yes, Charles W. Ward.

Riess: Was that the case often, that your father went over to pick out the materials.

Domoto: He was in Japan at the time, not only to buy plant material but at wartime there was some war material--junk steel and stuff like that--that could be sold at a profit.

Riess: You father is some smart man! He was in on all of those things?

Domoto: There was--what do you call it, a junkie?--yes, they called him a junkie, in Oakland and San Francisco [that] my father knew. They would get together a bunch of scrap iron and things to send and you could take orders over there. Of course, they had no trouble sending that over, the scrap material.

But Mr. Ward's idea in the Cottage Gardens, which was near Eureka, was to start a new Belgian-Holland concept up there. They were going to grow all of the conifers, the Araucarias.

Riess: Spell that for me. Why don't I know that name?

Domoto: The Norfolk Island pine, Araucaria. Coastal blue spruce, all of the types of conifers that we used to import and the hollies, the English bay, and then bulbs. He was going to grow the Dutch bulbs--the tulips and daffodils and all that sort of thing. Then the azaleas, of course, and rhododendrons, of course, were going to be one of the main things that they were going to raise up there because they figured the climate up there was closest to the climate of Holland and Belgium.

He even started a purebred dairy to get the manure for his nursery operation. The theory was quite good, but probably a little too much for him to oversee at one time. The dairy operation started to fold up because he had a dishonest superintendent or manager or whatever you might call him. Everytime a calf was born, they would substitute a nondescript cow or whatever for a thoroughbred and he would sell the thoroughbred. I think they were Jerseys, I think that was the breed that they were in. But at the time they should have had a nice, big herd, why they just had a mangy, old herd.

So [there was] that and then the bulb deal didn't turn out so good. They found up further north in Washington, in Bellingham, the government started to make some bulb experiments up there. They found the weather condition was better up there. But they didn't go into tulips either. They had trouble. I don't know what line they had, but daffodils they went into pretty heavily, the narcissus group and that area.

II TOICHI DOMOTO'S EDUCATION

Jobs for Japanese

Riess: If there hadn't been the quarantine, do you think that you would have gone into the hybridizing and so on that you did or did the quarantine create a kind of need?

Domoto: Actually, I liked plants in a way, in the beginning. I kind of think back to things that might have influenced me.

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Domoto: I used to like annuals, especially pansies. I know that one of our workers used to raise some pansies at home, just to sell to the different florists, and he brought me a couple of plants in this little four-inch pot and I thought more about that and trying to get some seed to set. I never got it to because I didn't know anything about growing these things. But I enjoyed that more than any of the shrubs that we had. Importing camellias--I didn't know anything about [them]. I clipped all of the buds off of them and I never got a licking for it, but I know I got a lecture for it! [laughter] Of course, they were brought in with the buds to sell.

The other thing possibly, as far as the Japanese are concerned, there weren't too many things that you could go into for a living. By that time I had been talking with several who had already graduated from college with a college degree and [they] had no place to go. But those who were from Japan or ones who had been sent over by the big companies to further their knowledge in the different branches, of course, as soon as they finished their study here they would go back. But the local fellows and the ones who didn't have that connection--like we used to say, "There were more college graduates selling art goods or pumping gas." Grant Avenue, the art goods stores, knicknack stores. They used to have college graduates selling that type of material.

Domoto: Then the only other outlet was gardening. The carpenters--you had no chance of getting a carpenter's job.

Riess: The unions were closed.

Domoto: Yes, so that was the only outlet there was. Even gardening, in the larger construction jobs, there was no new landscaping. There was no room there.

Riess: Who had that business by then?

Domoto: Most of that was by the old firms like McRorie and McLaren. McLaren was the father of Golden Gate Park.

Riess: It sounds like the Scotsmen had that business!

Domoto: Yes, the Scotch and Irish.

Riess: Were the Italians taken seriously as gardeners?

Domoto: The Italians were later. You see, a generation as it comes in, most of the first gardeners around here, the better gardeners that came in as head gardeners, were English, Scotch, Irish, and German because they were the ones that had the training in the European countries that had bigger estates. These larger estates were people of that ancestry, so naturally they would be inclined to--I was trying to think of the name of the fellow that was in charge of Filoli.

Riess: Yes, in an article about early Filoli, written by Albert Wilson, he talks about Phil Graves. But I don't know that he was the manager.

Domoto: But I think Graves might have been the man that followed after.

Riess: This was 1927. [reading] Albert Wilson, "fresh out of Stanford."* Did you know him?

Stanford, and University of Illinois

Domoto: He was a classmate of mine at Stanford. I started at Stanford, so we were together. In fact, in a class in morphology we used to be together.

Riess: So with the two years at Stanford, had you thought that you would graduate from Stanford?

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*"The Gardens of Filoli," by Albert Wilson, California Horticultural Journal, Vol. XXXI, No. 3, July 1970.

Domoto: Well, I thought so but I was in the group at the beginning of the cycle where they are supposed to have a general interest group instead of a specialized study. In other words, unless you were going into engineering or chemistry or medicine, if you were in anything else, you had to take what they called social--

Riess: Sort of a liberal education?

Domoto: A liberal education, and we were the first class to be--

Riess: Liberally educated!

Domoto: Yes, and then after the two years I found out that I was going to have to study some structural botany or something that wasn't in line with the things that I was going to do. I went back in the fall and I couldn't find anything and all of a sudden I decided to go back to Illinois because they did have a floriculture course. I always felt that college education as such wasn't too practical anyway from what I have seen of the fellows who had come in working for my father. It gave them the ability to be something, but as far as their ability to do things right away it was zero. There was always a conflict there between the fellows who did and didn't go.

Riess: So you had to go as far as Illinois though to get what you needed?

Domoto: That was nearest, yes.

Riess: It had a reputation?

Domoto: They were one of the few universities that was offering a floriculture course. It wasn't a nursery course. It was a floriculture course. It happened that I was working in the summertime for a florist from Chicago, Illinois. His name is Frank Oechslin. He came out for a florist nursery convention in San Francisco, and visited the nursery.

He talked with me and said, "What are you going to do?" I told him what I was going to study.

"Are you going to be a professor?"

I said, "No."

He said, "Ah, you're in the wrong school! You should come to Illinois." That's all he said. He said, "There is a nice school there for horticulture."

Domoto: At that time, we were raising cut flowers and pot plants and the importation part had been cut out altogether. We were still importing bulbs, but that was about the only thing we were able to import to sell and we were starting to try to raise a few camellia plants. But most of the import was just limited to new varieties for propagating stock, not to import to sell right away.

So I thought, "Gee! So far as income was concerned, cut flower business was pretty good." I thought, "Maybe that might be the answer."

Riess: Were you an only child?

Domoto: No, I was the oldest. So after starting the quarter at Stanford I found out I could go to Illinois. They said if I came right away I could get [there] in time for the first big midterm test for that semester. So I packed and went, and I never regretted it.

Because of my connection with the professor there, I was able to get a job during my relocation period with Schramm's Nursery in Illinois because they knew of my camellia knowledge. It so happened that the Schramms were of German descent and they had experienced the same thing that we were going through in World War I.

Riess: How good that that made them sympathetic. People very seldom remember what the Germans went through.

Domoto: Of course, they were young at the time, but they still remembered that part of it. Of course, their parents, those of the older generation--but he remembered pretty much when they went into Chicago at the time some of the things that happened to him. So I was very fortunate in being able to go there.

Cosmopolitan Club

Riess: Did you experience prejudice in Illinois in the late 1920s? There weren't very many Japanese there, were there?

Domoto: No, but in certain areas--of course, social-wise it still was not as heavy as out here on the coast, but still. [laughs] Some of the funny things! How narrow people think.

Domoto: I was president of the Cosmopolitan Club. We were going through initiation with the young freshmen that we were going to pledge. Of course, when you are in the Cosmopolitan Club you have a lot of students from other countries. So naturally, initiation would never be the kind of initiation that Greek-letter fraternities go through. We'd make believe we might have, but it was never a hazing type of initiation.

But this professor's son, he wanted to get to know the kids. He wanted to go into the diplomatic corps. He looked up the group and one of the other freshmen asked him to become a member, so we gave them [the initiates] a long initiation period of questions and answers, to see what their attitudes were, more than anything else. It was past midnight. There came a phone call and someone said, "It's for you, Prex."

"This is Professor So-and-So and if you are keeping my son there, I don't want him to join anywhere some damn old foreigner is giving them the works." And boy, did he read the riot act to me! For a professor, to say those things, they were supposed to be knowledgeable!

So then I told him, "Look, you can say what you want. If you don't want your son to join, that's up to you. But your son asked to become a member of his own free will and I think he would make a good member. But if you don't want him to, you talk it over with him when he gets home. If he still doesn't want to, we'll abide by it. But as far as any hazing, like you think that you've gone through in your fraternity, we're not a bunch of damn fools like you were." And that shut him up. He didn't say anything. About two years after, about graduation time, we had a farewell dinner and he apologized.

Riess: It sounds like it was an interesting group. Did the Cosmopolitan Club have many chapters?

Domoto: I think there were only about two chapters in the States then that had living groups. The rest of them were just social groups. Actually, unless you live with the group you don't get to know it; it's just a social group that would get together, like your YMCA, or any of the groups where you just meet once a month, and you get to know a person superficially. It is only when you live with them and fight with them and talk with them or you have to work with them together that then you get to know a person. But at that time, Cornell and Illinois were the only two that really had full accommodations where you lived in the house together. Chicago had what they called International House, which is a part of the same group, but they more or less kind of limited their membership to the Christian faith. It didn't have to be, but it was, more or less. So I don't think that they got the full cross section of what a cosmopolitan group should be.

Riess: That is very interesting.

Your father was doing some hybridizing, or was that more your interest?

Domoto: My father's early propagation and hybridizing work was with chrysanthemums. His early catalogue shows some of the early varieties and some of the awards that were received and some catalogue letters that show, and the correspondence I have found, were on the varieties that he had introduced. Carnations he worked with some, but mostly chrysanthemums.

Riess: Was he self-taught? He and his brother hadn't had training in this?

Domoto: No, he was the only one that really went into it. The other brother that came with him from Japan at the same time went into the mercantile brokerage business.

Riess: I thought that when it said Domoto Brothers--

Domoto: Yes, the "brothers" was a younger brother; there were several younger brothers that came after he got going. I think one of them was with us for quite awhile. The other ones were [with us] just a short while and [stayed] maybe five or ten years and then left for health reasons or just went back to Japan. But one of them stayed until we lost the property. But most of his education [in] growing was all from self education.

Riess: When he had the booming business in 1910, what was called the New Ranch and the twenty-five greenhouses, how many employees were there?

Domoto: They must have had [pause] nineteen or twenty people there, I guess. They used to have bunkhouses for them, I know that. The bunkhouses, I remember, I think there were at least twenty-one or twenty-two rooms in the bunkhouse for the men.

Riess: These were single men who had just come over from Japan?

Domoto: Yes, and then there were a couple of other rooms for--the married couples were mostly--the wife was probably helping to keep house and the man worked in the nursery; not all of them, but in some instances I think that was the way it worked. Otherwise, in some cases the man would be the cook for the bunch and the wife would either help the cook or they would be nursemaid. Those things kept changing.

Domoto: Incidentally, Filoli had a big bunkhouse, too.

Riess: Where the Italian gardeners lived?

Domoto: Yes. I don't know whether it is still there or not, but it was quite an impressive building there, with a recreation kind of room and everything. It was not the kind of ranch house--bunkhouse--that you connect with the average farm commercial area. It was really nicely put together.

Riess: Filoli is so isolated. I guess they really had to provide everything.

Domoto: Yes, I guess the nearest--if they wanted to get down--they had to go from there down that old road down into San Mateo or to the railroad to get into San Francisco.

Riess: We really have to concentrate more on Filoli, much as I have a whole lot more little questions for you. Domoto Brothers, Inc., closed at the time of the Depression and that was about when your father was retiring anyway, or did that just knock him out completely?

Domoto: No, that's probably what knocked him out more than anything else. He was at the age when his health was bad. But I think that's probably what did it.

III FILOLI, POST WORLD WAR II

Bulbs

Domoto: The other name that comes into my mind now at Filoli [is] Peter Valinga. He was a Hollander that came over right after the war, he and his wife.

Riess: After the First World War?

Domoto: Second. They sold Dutch bulbs and he put in quite a nice display. He used to put in a display at the Oakland garden show, the spring garden show, and I remember because he used to put on the regular Dutch costume with the clogs, their wooden shoes. Before that, I think they used to buy their bulbs through one of the other bulb dealers--I don't know where he used to buy them--but because of the garden exhibit they put in, he was able to break in there and sell her an order of bulbs. He also made it a point that he would like to set those bulbs out for her. I know that the first year they came up, they were planted very carefully and of course came up--and after that, why, he was in, because the arrangement and the varieties and everything, he really made the show.

Riess: That would have been just his specialty though?

Domoto: Just bulbs and then other things that they wanted. Along with that, I think that this is about the period when Mrs. Roth started to spend a little more time at Filoli instead of traveling or else in the spring, when she would be there when the gardens were in bloom, because they were traveling around all of the time because of her interest in horses and the harness racing. Quite often that season kind of tied in with the spring season, and the result was that I know that the gardener said, "Mrs. Roth doesn't see the prettiest time of the garden because she is out or she comes in at night," and at night time, unless they have the lights on, she didn't see it.

Toichi, Troubleshooter

Domoto: When she started to enjoy the garden more, that is when I started to get called out more and more to come down to see what--and as far as the design, I am not a designer, but when they were having trouble about where they should plant it where it would grow, I could tell them the location. So that was my feeling, and that is the way I have always told any of my customers, "I don't know if they are going to look good there. That is not my business. But if the soil or something is there, I can tell you about the environment in relation to buildings or sunshine. I can tell you whether it will grow there or not. But whether that is going to be right plant for there or not, I don't know. You have to get somebody else to do that."

Riess: With the soil, do you just go by feel or were you doing tests?

Domoto: No, I could do some tests but most of it [was] from seeing what is growing. Most of the gardens are not new. They are old gardens and seeing what is growing there otherwise. If there is like azaleas or rhododendrons, they are making the beds anyway. So if they wanted to plant rhododendrons or azaleas there, why, we'd go ahead and do it. But some of the things were learned there. In the front garden, the court garden, over the years, that whole section, they used to have a lot of Hinodegiri azaleas in there. They started to go out and then gradually we replaced them once and they still kept [failing]. We couldn't figure it out. I think it was just before Mr. Thiringer. He may have already been there, but I think it was a man before him, as I recall. What is Thiringer's first name?

Riess: Leslie.

Domoto: No, it was someone else. [pause] But this man was there just a short time.

What we found was that the roots of those big maples in the courtyard were coming up into the beds. So they decided to put a false bed in there and make a bed and put the azaleas on top. They put four-by-fours I guess in and some planks on there and put the peat moss on top, and they closed the ends off so it wouldn't show the boards. [With] the humidity in there, the roots still went up through air space up to the top. So then later they had to leave an air space where the roots would be air pruned because it was coming through and the air would dry the roots before it had a chance to go up into the top.

Domoto: I don't know if they have still kept it, but that was the only way they could keep--the annuals, they didn't have too much trouble, because they would dig a hole and the flowers come up and they are gone. Most of the annual flowers were grown in the greenhouse and then as soon as they are ready to flower and Mrs. Roth was having a party or something, they would bring it down and set it around the base of the trees. Then when two or three days are over, they would take it back and the greenhouse would have to supply some more plants to keep that cover going.

But the permanent plants, when the roots are in competition, that's when they start to get into trouble. That's because the trees got bigger and bigger.

Riess: That's interesting. I can't remember whether they still have azaleas around there.

Domoto: They still have the azaleas, but whether they still kept that false bottom in there or not, I don't know. But that was the solution for it and then I think one of the magnolias they had in there finally died. We are not sure whether it was oak root fungus. It could be, because by that time oak root fungus started to grow in there and we weren't sure whether the azaleas were going from oak root fungus or they were in competition with the maple tree roots.

Riess: I never thought about oak root fungus, but of course the whole area could have been infected.

Domoto: Yes, it could be but without having an actual autopsy of the thing ahead of time, until after they were gone and destroyed, we have no way of telling what caused it.

Riess: Is your philosophy in general to replace or do you try to save?

Domoto: Yes, I think so, to just go ahead and replace. You are familiar with the area down there?

Riess: Yes.

Domoto: Do you know where the garage is? There is a little planting, a court circle there, a sort of a border. I don't know what is planted there now, but at one time I think they had Raphiolepsis or something in there and the deer used to eat it up. So then they found that the Sasanqua camellias were not being chewed by the deer. So she planted that whole bed with Shishi Gashira and the edging, I think, is boxwood if I remember--either boxwood or myrtle, but I think it is boxwood. They got just above the boxwood

Domoto: and they started to make a nice cover for that mound there and then all of a sudden they started to get chewed on. They couldn't figure it out. It wasn't the old deer, it was the young deer that started to chew on it! [laughter]

Riess: They already had developed a little taste for it!

Domoto: Yes, I guess so. They didn't mind the bitterness or whatever it was of the foliage.

IV MISS ISABELLA WORN

Riess: What do you personally remember of Isabella Worn?

Domoto: Personality-wise, she was very decisive.

Riess: That is not very good in a woman maybe?

Domoto: No, she wasn't [bad]. Like my sister said, she would arrive and say, "Where's your father?" [sharply] "Go call him." And my sister says, "I never liked her, because she was too bossy."

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Riess: Do you think that was her behavior with everybody?

Domoto: Yes--and not inclined to be too talkative until later. She knew just exactly what she wanted and she made up her mind what she wanted and that was what she wanted. But I noticed in her later years when she came, she used to ask me, or ask Mrs. Domoto, "What do you think of this or that for color?" Alice used to say, "Gee, Miss Worn is getting older, she is asking," and before, that was the last thing she would do, ask what you thought about this or that. She would make the decision and that was final.

Riess: Was there a way of introducing her to new varieties? After all, she was coming to a place where new things were happening all of the time.

Domoto: She would ask, "What do you have new?" Or she would spot the new things. She had an eye for new things, or things that would fit into the different areas, or for different customers that she had in mind. Actually, landscape-wise was a little later thing for her. First, mainly she was an interior decorator.

Riess: Yes, that's what I've heard,making arrangements for parties.

Domoto: Making floral decorations. I remember going over to--I saw the effects afterwards and heard about it later--that we had supplied her with a lot of Van derCraysen azaleas that had been forced for this big party that was going to be held in I think it was the Fairmont Hotel. There was this whole big mass on the wall and I couldn't figure out how they were all stuck up there. After, we found out she had just broke them and stuck them up in there because this was an over-night affair.

Someone said that at that time sort of a competitor of hers--not a real competitor, but trying to do the same kind of work--was a florist maned Stein in San Francisco. I understand he happened to be watching her starting to do it and she saw him and they tell me that she said [firmly], "Get that man out of here and close that door! I'm not going to work anymore until you get him out of the room!" [laughter] That's what they told me the next day when I was looking at that. And that was her. She would do what she had in mind. She had a certain way she had to go and it would either be Miss Worn's way or no other way. But she had the good taste of doing it and when she got through, it looked good, so she could get by with it.

I think when you are dealing with society league people that are spoiled--not all, but a lot of them have had their way and they want their way or rather they think they know what they want--to be able to go in there and tell them, "No, that's not the way it should go, [it should go] this way," and to do it and get by with it, you have to have the personality that she did in order to be able to do it.

Riess: Yes, I think you are right.

Domoto: I think she was a good psychologist. But inside she was a very warm person.

Riess: How do you know?

Domoto: Being an old maid and putting her nieces and nephews through school and paying for their family and everything, without their knowing too much about it. I don't know to this day whether--sometimes, a couple of times, in talking, the others seem to kind of slight her, but knowing what she was doing, after her talking to my father about what she had done or was doing, I have a feeling that a lot of things she was doing for them was on the sly.

Riess: So she opened up to your father.

Domoto: Oh yes, because my father was pretty much that way, kind of brusque sometimes. He would be very frank to some people, and maybe he was too frank, but what he did say, why most of the time was the truth. So that was it.

Riess: She had a nephew who has a nursery in San Anselmo, Donald Perry?

Domoto: Yes, he still has it, I think, or he may have sold it. But the nursery I think is still operating, the Sunnyside Nursery. He may have sold it and the name may still be kept there.

Riess: I was wondering how many nurseries did she use? Did she use you all exclusively?

Domoto: Oh no, no, she went all over, wherever she could get potted plants, she would go to Geneva, Evergreen, James. Cut flowers she would get, like roses if she needed a bunch of roses for a home, a lot of cut roses, Avansino's for cut flowers. She knew who to depend on for the best in the line of materials she needed.

Riess: How about some of the eastern mail order places? Did western gardeners use Burpee, Wayside?

Domoto: I think some of them did. I think Wayside, to what extent they did out here I don't know.

Riess: Would there be things that would be exclusive to those like Burpee or Wayside?

Domoto: Wayside, most of their things until recently were material that was more or less geared for the middle western [and] eastern states. The Pacific Coast area, we were always the outcast. In other words, west of the Milwaukee and mountain states we had another price and unless it was really something good, we were kind of balking at that extra tax they stuck on.

Riess: So it wasn't that the materials were not adaptable to western--

Domoto: No, but you see most a lot of the things that they had were deciduous things. Once an easterner comes out to California and stays out here for awhile, outside of maybe lilacs and peonies, they want flowers all the year around. They want a shrub. [They will say], "Gee, only one time of flower? No flowers all year around?" They get spoiled, just like with the weather. They forget that there is four seasons. But they do miss their four seasons once in awhile.

Riess: Yes, I have read a lot about your development of tree peonies and yet still I don't see peonies that much in California.

Domoto: Well, you won't find them any other place either because their propagation is so difficult. [pause; looking in phone book] Yes, there is a Sunnyside Nursery in San Anselmo. It is still there. It doesn't say who the owner is any more, but it is still there.

Riess: That is interesting to know. Did you deal also with Miss Worn when you were in your own business or was she retired by then?

Domoto: No, she was still buying materials not only for Filoli but for the other people down the peninsula and San Francisco.

Riess: In fact, she worked for San Simeon, did you say? It was the connection with Julia Morgan?

Domoto: Yes, she came out, as I remember, to my dad's place, with Julia Morgan. But Miss Worn went around the San Leandro area at that time picking up a lot of the trees in the yards that were available. We were buying plants, too, at that time. We used to go out and, with like magnolias and camellias, we used to go out with a crew and dig them up and bring them in and establish them for sale.

But quite often we would go in there to buy something and then they would say, "It's already sold." I would say, "Who bought it?" "I don't know, some lady came and bought it." Almost invariably of course she would pay more than we would because of going direct and that was the time when San Simeon was being developed. Some was freighted down, but some of the bigger plants were barged down, especially after the fair. A lot of the things had to be barged down. The roads weren't that good and the trucks now, of course, they have these big semis but in those days they were so small that you couldn't transport more than one or two trees. But you could put them on a big barge in San Francisco or in Oakland and the barge could go on down and land right down there because Hearst built a dockside down there for all of these European things to come in. So a lot of the camellias that are down there came from the San Leandro-Sacramento area.

Riess: So she was the designer also, you are saying, for most of the big estates on the peninsula side?

Domoto: I don't think so much designing. I think most of that design part was already in. I think she was more actually helping to fill in. Like Filoli, the main part was already in. There wasn't too much to change. But, for instance, she would want some plants for in the corridor or the room or for this jar or that jar in there or

Domoto: if they were going to have a party in the ballroom she would want some plants for the decoration for the party that was going to be held in the ballroom, that type of material, that was what we were called on mostly to supply.

Then, as far as the camellia varieties that went down there, Mrs. Roth used to come on her own in the camellia season.

Riess: And see them in bloom here?

Domoto: See them in bloom or ask which was in and ask me to send them over and then select them.

Riess: How was it to work with Mrs. Roth?

Domoto: Oh, very easy.

Riess: She would defer to you or would she have a point of view that was very--

Domoto: Oh no, there were certain things that she, as long as it would fit into her garden, why, that was it. But I think, unless it didn't fit in and didn't grow, if it wouldn't grow there, she would say, "Would it fit some other place?" That was the way she would ask.

Riess: Because she would be attracted to the plant itself? She was drawn to it?

Domoto: Yes.

V APPRECIATING THE CHARACTER OF GARDENS

Riess: It occurred to me to wonder whether you would send any of your customers then to see something in a site or location at Filoli. People might say to you, "How does this really look? How does it grow?"

Domoto: No, I don't do that. Neither Filoli nor some of the other places. No, I feel that the garden is their own place. If it's like a park, it's different. But a private home, unless they have a very rare tree that they are very, very proud of and I know that they are showing it to people, I will say, "There is a garden in Piedmont where it is growing" or "There is a garden in Berkeley I know where it grows well." But as far as telling them that they should go see it, I don't, I never did. Quite often--and I always felt the same way--a person puts a garden in and you don't like to have every Tom, Dick and Harry. The thing is, that the people that you would like to have come in are the ones that respect that. The ones that you would just as soon not come in are the most brazen that come in.

Riess: Yes, I'm sure!

Domoto: So I feel they are not going to miss anything. The other thing, the ones who are the most brazen are the ones who don't always absorb what they should see.

Riess: Perhaps so; that sounds very Japanese.

Domoto: Their ego is, "I went to see so-and-so's place." "What did you see there?" "I don't know," or what they tell you they saw is kind of superficial.

Riess: That is interesting, because when you think of the way tours of gardens are run, it <u>is</u> often a tour of the <u>names</u> of things. This, I think, is very western, this kind of checking off the <u>names</u> of things, rather than <u>experiencing</u> it.

Domoto: Is it? I don't think so. I think it all depends on the person. I don't think it's a matter of race or color. You go into a certain garden and the way it is put together, they say, "Gee, this garden has a certain feeling." If it is really an intimate garden, it reflects the feeling of the person that has done it or his character. But if it is done by an architect, it doesn't reflect the owner's character sometimes.

Now it is changing quite a bit, but for awhile I could go up to any of the peninsula gardens--of all the gardens we have supplied materials to, I have never visited but very few of them. But I could go into the garden and say, "This is Tommy Church's garden, this is so-and-so's garden, or this is so-and-so's design." There would be certain ways the plants were put in, the type of materials put in there, that would almost be the same as putting a signature at the bottom of a painting.

Riess: I guess what I was thinking about is the question, when you go through a garden, whether it is even necessary to name what things are.

Domoto: The only time it would be necessary is if someone is interested in recording it for planting themselves or finding out what it would do and also, the picture as a whole you appreciate as an ensemble, not as each piece of a costume.

Riess: Yes, I think so and yet Filoli seems to be like a real sort of garden club because there are so many things to learn.

Domoto: Yes, and it has been changed. For instance, the natural garden, over the years they have tried to keep things in there that would be growing naturally, that garden up in back of their tennis courts. Then the rose garden, of course, was the formal garden. They used to have--I don't know if they are still there--a row of espalliered fruit trees going back.

Riess: Yes, I think that has kind of fallen by the wayside.

Domoto: Yes, that takes a lot of knowledge and a lot of work to keep it pruned up.

Riess: I think their intention is to start that again actually.

Domoto: But where are you going to get the men to do it? By men I mean the skill to do it.

VI TEACHING THE SKILLS; FLORICULTURE SCHOOLS

Riess: You must know Mai Abergast.

Domoto: Yes.

Riess: Mai Abergast has hopes that it will be a school.

Domoto: Yes, but then who is going to teach this school? You could put up a school and get the dollars for it, but who is going to teach it? Where are the teachers?

Riess: I don't know. Where are the teachers? Do people use you as a teacher?

Domoto: No, I refuse to teach.

Riess: And the School of Floriculture at the University of Illinois?

Domoto: Well, that's the old group. See, the schools like that go in cycles. It is only as good as the man in charge that knows something and then it passes the prime and unless they have some of the younger people coming in that have the same dedication, it passes on. At one time in the line of floriculture it was Cornell, then it was Illinois, and then it became Ohio State, then it became Michigan. I don't follow it that closely, but is so happened that at Ohio State was one of the students of Professor Dohner from Illinois. Then Michigan became quite prominent in floricultural work because of a classmate of mine in Illinois [who was there]. The same as Davis now. For a long time we used to kind of turn up our noses at Davis. But now it has come right up because they have people up there that are [not only] experimental minded, but more on the side that will apply to either the nursery or forestry or to the garden group. They have to be able to sell themselves, not only the knowledge that they know. Unless they can sell themselves, the knowledge doesn't go over.

Riess: Do you mean more so than in the other trades because they deal with the public so much?

Domoto: Yes, I think so. I think in anything, besides just the knowledge, unless you can impart that knowledge to someone else, unless it is something that can be written down and you can absorb it like a math problem or a chemistry equation. But in other things you have to be able to impart that enthusiasm for that subject.

Riess: Yes, right, but on the other hand, some people might argue that everybody now has a little of this knowledge through Sunset Magazine and through horticultural journals.

Domoto: But that is the sad part of it. They have just a--you know, when you are cooking, you have a smattering but the last bit that goes in that gives that little difference in the taste that [makes you] say, "Gee, this is good," or "Why doesn't this one taste just as good?" That is what's missing.

I think there is a possibility, as they go along with Filoli--I have high hopes for Filoli, I like the place, the environment is good--and it is only a matter of time that I look forward to seeing it as a western arboretum, because it is big enough, and the climate is a lot better than Golden Gate Park. Golden Gate Park is fine for rhododendrons, just that type of material. But for general nursery stock, nursery ornamentals, not so good.

They [Filoli] could develop, for instance, a collection of almost any kind of shrubs. You were talking about peonies. Now, peonies down there where they planted them have done well. Look how well the maples have done in their court over the years, [how] the magnolias have done. Granted some of the soil has been made over, but after that original made-over soil is used up, and the roots go out, and you see how some of the other things are growing, that means that the surroundings and the basic structure is good.

VII ITALIAN GARDENERS

Riess: Did the Italian gardeners really develop as garden experts, do you think, or were they more just laborers?

Domoto: There is a cycle there. I may be wrong, but originally, if you check--I think he is still alive--Clarence Hoff in Oakland near Mills College, you might check with him on the original membership of the Pacific Coast Horticultural Society. That used to be all white--all white and mostly Scotch and Irish, very few Italians in there, almost none. Of course, there are some florist groups like Podesta-Baldocchi. But the rest of them are outsiders. But the other group, the horticultural society itself, if you look at the names there, [they are] Irish, some German, but there are few other names in there. You might ask him. He is retired now. He used to be at Hallowell's for a long time, but he is retired now. I think he has his buttons still and you could just ask him.

Riess: Actually, that reminds me, when I was doing a Thomas Church oral history, that I interviewed a nursery man who was near Colma who was an Italian.*

Domoto: Tommy Church used to buy a lot of plants from Pacific Nursery at Colma. Lou Schenone was in that, but then Lou was about the fourth generation there. Before Lou his boss was Kempf. But you see the son [Paul] served in the army in the group there and he wasn't interested too much in the nursery and Lou was his foreman, so he took over the operation and did a good job of it. But the original Kempf was a German with a German accent and he was the one who had the Pacific Nursery and they used to grow a lot of shrubs and bedding plants. Before that, there used to be, I think we had an old catalogue--I think I sent that over to the Strybing--was Ludemann.

Riess: So this doesn't prove anything about Italians.

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*Thomas D. Church, Landscape Architect, Two volumes, Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley, 1978.

Domoto: No, and as far as the flower market is concerned, at first there was no market at all. Probably flowers were being sold here and there. My father started in selling some and then people started to bring them in. The carnation growers from this side of the bay, and down the peninsula--the peninsula was mostly chrysanthemum growers. The original Japanese growers were mostly in chrysanthemums, and some carnations, but mostly chrysanthemums. On this side, a lot of them were in carnations and roses. They used to have these bamboo baskets that were about four feet long and two by two. They would pack the flowers in there and put them on their back and take the steam trains to the Mole, and take the ferry over to San Francisco, and then sell them over there.

Then at that time, the first place that I remember was Lick Place where they had the store and that was where Miss Worn used to have her business on the second floor above the store for quite a while. The original flower market was in the basement.

Then from there they moved over to Bush Street, on the corner of Bush and St. Anne where the telephone exchange is. That used to be the big market. Then from there they moved down to Fifth Street, and from Fifth they moved up to Brannen. But at the time between I would say Lick Place and even up to the early days of St. Anne's, mostly the Italian growers came in with the maidenhair fern. They were raising maidenhair and violets. Most of their violets were for shipping out. In those days McLellan, Domoto, Enomotos, used to do a big shipping of violets and chrysanthemums.

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Domoto: The Italians, I think, were mostly growing vegetables first. Then my feeling is that most of them being devout Catholics, they have to have flowers to take to the cemetery.

Riess: Yes, and to the altar.

Domoto: --Or to the altar. If they can't go and buy them and the woman is quite good, she will plant a few seeds to grow some flowers for decoration day or whatever day to have some. Pretty soon they find, when they go to market with the vegetables to the vegetable market, they take some into the market. They found out that bunch of calendulas around there or whatever they brought in was bringing in more than the bunch of radishes that they were bringing in. So gradually the flowers took over, and the same with your original maidenhair growers that used to grow maidenhair and asparagus and also, in those days, the smilax in long garlands for decoration. It was used in festooning the dinner tables. Those were mostly grown in those long houses by the Italian gardeners.

Domoto: Then from there they started getting into pot plants. But up till that time most of the pot plants were being raised by the Japanese growers and some of the German growers. Then the Italian growers got in. Geneva was one of the biggest ones that got in, the Podesta Brothers and some of those came in. But I think all of it ties in with the availability of cheap labor. When my father was operating, we had a number of trainees, so-called, where they had agricultural training in Japan, coming over here either wanting to study or there were some that came over with the idea of evading the conscription--compulsory military training.

Of course, that stopped and then pretty soon the immigration laws stopped them from coming in--quotas. Then for a while there the Italian group--there was no restriction on those. They came in quite heavily. So they were being used quite heavily like in Geneva's there. Along in '28, '29, and the thirties I used to go over to the market there to go down to Geneva's to buy some potted plants to sell. If I went over there at lunch time and they were having lunch, it was fun to sit down at the table with them. They would have this long dinner table and the spaghetti and macaroni was being served in these great big tin wash trays or casters. They would take it [demonstrates rolling it] right on down the line. Then right next to it were these big casks of wine. They could go up there and get all they wanted.

Then the unions came in and then they had to change that because they couldn't have no more free time to go and drink their vino whenever they wanted to. They had to have a rest period and all of this, different things that they wanted. So then they cut out going to the wine bar whenever they wanted. They cut the time down. They used to work from dawn to dusk. They would go up there in order to drink the wine or eat there or whatever they wanted to do.

They used to make it kind of tough for me because when I would go out to buy something at the place, they always insisted that I have a cup of vino and since I don't drink, at first--after they got to know me, but before that they thought I was refusing their hospitality. But those are the changes that you see.

VIII PRUNING AT FILOLI

Riess: I wondered how many people were brought in from the outside or whether they tried, when Filoli was rolling, to have a completely self-sufficient crew.

Domoto: My first trip down there, I think at that time they said, "We don't use the bunkhouse as much as we used to." But even then I think they had about nine or eleven gardeners.

Riess: Yes, that is what I've heard.

Domoto: Yes, because to keep up the formal beds with the annuals and planting the annuals--and they used to grow all of those annuals themselves--that took a lot of help. When the costs started to go up, then they found out that they could go out and buy the plants a lot cheaper than they could grow them themselves and get better plants that were more uniform.

Riess: How about pruners?

Domoto: The heavy pruning of the trees, I think, was done by this Davey tree man that would come in about once or twice here or whenever it was necessary, especially [for] the low hanging branches that were dangerous, they would have them come in. The garden pruning, some of it was I would say--there was one period there when it was neglected pretty bad. When Mr. Thiringer finally took over, I went down and some of the camellias were way out into the walks and everything. He said, "Do you think it would be all right to prune these back to give more room to the walk?" I said, "Yes, it won't hurt any." So he said, "I'm going to prune them when Mrs. Roth isn't around." I said, "Just forget about that, but do it when the season is right and when I see Mrs. Roth I will tell her that they should be pruned back," and I was pretty sure that she would agree with me.

Domoto: I think one thing that really kind of impressed Mrs. Roth was they had one big weeping cherry tree in the yard. I think it's gone now. The borers finally got hold of it. But at the head of the formal gardens there was a big weeping cherry. At the top borers or something--it got sunburned and borers had gotten it. They were about ready to take it out. The tree man had said, "Take it out."

Thiringer asked me. Well, I said, "Maybe if you clean it out and shade it a little bit, you might be able to save it. But it's going to look bad for awhile," because whereas it used to cover maybe about twelve or fourteen feet, it was down to about three feet. He said he would try. Fortunately, I guess, in that following season it started to come up, because in the meantime, if we had found another replacement, I know that that would have gone out and we would have put the tree in. But the biggest replacement they could find, the head was no bigger than the tree they were putting in. So we did send one down there, but to be kept as a reserve to put in there later. When that one started to come out with having a root system there, it really took over again.

I think she had quite a bit of confidence in him then because not having a full gardener's training--but he was very thorough--I think he was an attorney or a judge before he came over.

Riess: I didn't realize that he had that background, but I knew that he was sent to horticultural school here, wasn't he?

Domoto: No, he used to go to horticultural classes at night. I forgot who the teacher was, but he [Thiringer] asked me questions. [He'd say], "You know, that guy don't know nothing." He said, "I can pick up that stuff from the books. But he don't tell me the nitty gritty. The thing I want to find out, I ask him and he kind of puts me off."

So I would say, "I can't tell you, but I'll try to find out for you," and I would give him the information. But he was very thorough. Everything he would write down in his own notes. Like the camellias [were] in there, the different ones--he made a list of their names and where they were located and then if some of the labels were gone, he would start to relabel them so that he could remember what they were.

When the big wisteria that goes around the top of the building was getting all viney and rough, and then I think it was the eugenia on the side, it got too big--and now I think they took that out, because it could be taken out, and put something else in--anyway,

Domoto: the wisteria was getting so viney and that was when I was able to get Mr. Okasaki, the man I had doing my bonsai work, to go down there and do the pruning on the [wisteria]. I would say that he probably might have been the first Japanese gardener to work on the place as far as I know. There may have been others but most of the others were Italian because the head gardener was Italian and I doubt very much if there were any Japanese on there before that.

Riess: So when Mr. Okasaki was there, did he then just come in by day?

Domoto: He just went in there for that time for the wisteria. Because he did a good job on the wisteria, there was a big chamaecyparis obtusa [Hinoki cypress] in the front that had come over on both sides and had really outgrown itself there. Mr. Thiringer wanted to have him prune that out and it was on the edge of the stairway. It closed off about half or better than half, I guess, of the small walkway. When they cut that back, of course you had almost a full sweep of the steps. Underneath all of the branches that came across--I forget what it was. It was either an old Italian vase or a figure that was supposed to match one of the others that they thought was lost and here it had been underneath all of the branches there. Then when that came out, of course, it really looked good. So I think since then, they have had him back to do some of that topiary type of pruning and then some of the pruning of the trees, the bonsai trees [that were] around, that type of pruning. I think he had gone back for that.

But the big trees and the roadway tree pruning, I think that is still Davey or some other tree group comes in for that.

I think for a while there Stocking Roses in San Jose was supplying them with roses.

Transcriber: Michelle Stafford
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TOICHI DOMOTO, NURSERYMAN

Over sixty years experience with flowers

Wm. E. Schmidt, Portola Valley, California

For as far back as he can recall, to earliest childhood, Toichi Domoto was among flowers. Ornamental plants literally have been his whole life and he intends to enjoy their company for many years to come when his plans for retirement are resolved — soon, he hopes.

Toichi was virtually born among flowers on December 11, 1902, in his parents' home at the Domoto Bros. Nursery. As he grew up in the nursery, he often went along on horse-drawn delivery wagons, a small boy sitting proudly "up front." Later he made a number of day-long trips from the nursery in Fitchburg (now 78th Avenue and Olive Street, Oakland) to delivery points in San Francisco, as far as Castro Street or out to Fillmore Street. The two-horse express wagon would leave the nursery in the dark early morning hours, get on a ferry for San Francisco, make the deliveries and usually get back in the middle or late afternoon.

This early association with plants actually links the horse-and-buggy days of the nursery business in this area to the present, or so-called jet age. As Toichi comments: "For me that's all there was to do. When I was small, I played in the Domoto Bros. Nursery. As I grew up, I worked in the nursery. Later I started my own nursery."

How did the Domoto Bros. Nursery, where Toichi learned how to grow plants, get its own start? What was it like through the years of transitions? For that we'll have to go back to June 10, 1867, or perhaps it was 1866, when Toichi's father, Kanetaro Domoto, was born in Wakayama Ken in Japan. Dates of those early years are not know exactly, for many records have been lost.

When he was only sixteen years old, Kanetaro and a brother came to the United States, arriving in Seattle. Next year, 1883, finds him in San Francisco. With little knowledge of English and in need of a job, he began as a kitchen helper at the Palace Hotel. Sometime later he worked in the gardens of the Adolph Sutro estate, now Sutro Heights Park, overlooking Seal Rocks and the beach in San Francisco.

About this time he entered his first business venture by importing a quantity of Unshiu or Satsuma oranges from Japan (no import restrictions in those years!). The novel fruits reached San Francisco in good condition and sold well. But a second and bigger repeat shipment arrived totally rotted and he "lost his shirt," as he recalled later.

Undaunted, he and another brother, Motonoshin, started a small nursery in Oakland, about where Third and Grove Streets are now. This was a success and in a few years, in the late 1880's, they bought four acres of land on Central Avenue and East 14th Street in East Oakland. This is now 55th Avenue and East 14th Street, in the Melrose district of Oakland. Subsequently, in the 1890's, they added four more acres to the property.

Here the two brothers soon established a range of greenhouses and lathhouses. Their main business was the growing of chrysanthemums and carnations in the greenhouses for cut flowers. They also raised some seasonal flowering plants in pots.

By 1890 they were importing plants from Japan that were shipped during the dormant season. They also brought in Australian specialties, imported forcing aza[illegible] from Belgium and bulbs from Holland for forcing in pots or as cut flowers. Among their earliest importations of camellias from Japan was *Camellia japonica* 'Usu-Otome,' which Toichi's father renamed 'Pink Perfection.'

By this time the brothers had acquired new first names and were known far and wide in the trade as Tom (or Thomas K.) for Kanetaro Domoto, and Henry for his brother Motonoshin Domoto. They also more or less divided the responsibilities of the thriving nursery. Henry managed the cut flowers and the selling end, while Tom took on the growing of ornamental shrubs, trees and pot plants such as coleus, pelargoniums, holiday peppers, poinsettias and Easter lilies.

For this article Toichi loaned me his much-used copy of the forty page *Descriptive Catalogue of Japanese Plants and Shrubs,* issued by the "Domoto Bros., Proprietors" in 1892. It has no illustrations and some of the botanical names are, of course, different from those we have for the same plants today. The catalogue is fascinating, not only for the curious spelling and terms, but particularly for the great variety of ornamental plants listed. A surprising number of them are considered "new" in 1969!

The inside cover is devoted to "How to Reach Our Nursery." It describes in detail how to get to the Domoto Bros. Nursery in East Oakland from any direction by such means as "Broad or Narrow Gauge" (Oakland and S.F. R.R.) ferry, "Hayward electric car," "Oakland and Berkeley electric car" and even "Overland train."

The "General List of Plants" almost at once starts out with a most remarkable offer of *Acer palmatum:* "Acer Polyporphum — Japanese Maple. 35 varieties." This is followed by a listing of various sizes and prices, from 35¢ to 75¢ each. (These are all retail prices). The offer continues: "4 or 6 kinds grafted on one stalk each 50¢; per dozen $4.50; per 100 $35. Two stalks growing together and twisted, grafted from 5 to 7 kinds on stalk,

each 75¢; per dozen $6.00; 10 to 12 different kinds on stalk, $1.25 to $1.50."

Reading on, to azaleas in many varieties, *Camellia japonica* in four colors and *C. sasanqua*, five varieties; we notice *"Cedrela Chinensis,"* two species of shrub clerodendrums, corylopsis, and we come to *Cryptomeria japonica.* This is followed by a listing of eight named varieties, such as "Cryptomeria Yenko — Cord-like foliage, weeping nature. Height 1 to 1½ feet, each 35¢; per dozen $2.75." Other cryptomerias have foliage described as: "Silver white foliage;" "Twined cock and comb shapes, very curious;" "Chain like, drooping," and "Slender growth, in shape like peacock tail." Prices from 25¢ to $1.25 each. Less by the dozen.

Four fuchsia varieties are named: E. G. Hill, Storm King, Phenomenal and "Sun Ray — A beautiful red variegated foliage and red single flowers; and many more varieties. Each 15¢; per dozen $1.50."

Among numerous other plants there follow eight different magnolias; a white-berried *Nandina domestica;* many colors in tree peonies; flowering peaches and flowering apricots, with double and single flowers and in white, pink, red and variegated, respectively.

Fifteen species and varieties of "Climbing Plants" include four wisterias, one of which is "Two kinds on the stalk, blue and white; each $1.00 to $1.25."

The selection of over fifty species and varieties of ferns includes seven species of tree ferns, the latter from $3.50 to $7.50 each for established plants. There are seventeen species of palms; thirty-four varieties of *Pelargonium domesticum,* listing at least seven names known in the trade of today.

Among roses offered and described are twenty-five "Hybrid Perpetual Roses," including "General Jacqueminot, 25¢" and "Paul Neyron, 15¢ to 25¢;" seventeen "Climbing and Noisette Roses" include "Marechal Neil, 20¢ to 30¢" and "Lady Banksia, 15¢ to 20¢;" forty-nine "Everblooming Tea and Hybrid" include "La France, 15¢ to 25¢" and "Papa Gontier, 25¢ to 35¢" and thirty "Bourbon Roses" including "Rainbow (California New Rose) — . . . color bright pink, striped and splashed with brilliant crimson in handsome way, 25¢ to 35¢."

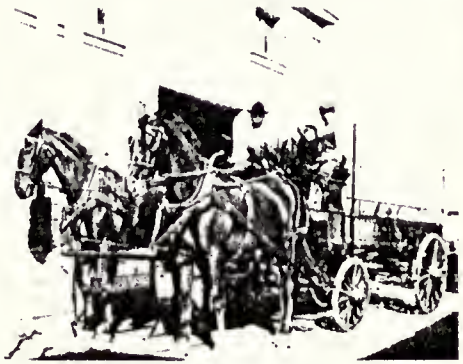
Chrysanthemum plants were their great specialty. Twelve pages name and describe over two hundred varieties of all types, shapes and colors, including "Grand Japanese and California Varieties Introduced in 1892," at 30¢ each and "Choice Eastern Varieties, Introduced in 1892," at 25¢ each. General collection varieties are priced at 10¢, 15¢ and 20¢ each.

The last three pages are devoted to "Japanese Fruit Trees" and include nut trees. "Persimmon (or Japanese Date Plum)" is described in detail and priced: "3 to 4 feet high; per dozen $1.50; per 100 $8.00." Plums "3 feet high; per dozen $2.00; per 100 $12.00." A "Mammoth Chestnut," also a "Japan Walnut," the latter at 40¢ each, per dozen $4.00. Among others are a "Japan Quince" and "Loquat Japonica;" eight kinds of citrus, described in detail, with average size three feet high and priced at 50¢ each; $5.00 per dozen. Three berries conclude the list, including the new raspberry-like "Japan Wineberry — . . . rich wine-colored berries thickly covered with purplish hairs; flavor sweet and juicy; 25¢ each, $2.50 per dozen." Toichi states that from 1890 to 1910 the Domoto Bros. Nursery imported many thousands of fruit trees, nut trees and citrus trees each year from Japan, of many more varieties than are listed in this catalogue.

Especially notable is the extensive collection of variegated plants offered in this catalogue of 1892. There are at least thirty-six kinds and, beside familiar ones, such unusual plants as "Gardenia Pleno — Variegated foliage with yellow"; "Ginkgo Variegata — Variegated with yellow and white, a rare variety," *Podocarpus macrophylla* 'Variegata,' *Ternstroemia japonica* 'Variegata;' *Kadsura japonica* 'Variegata,' *Sciadopitys verticillata* 'Variegata' and "Rhapis Flabelliformis Variegata — Very rare variety."

A final note of special interest is that, even as early as 1892, the Domoto brothers were also importing large specimen plants. An example in this catalogue is *Cycas revoluta,* of which they list small plants from 25¢ to medium ones for $3.00 each, but also offer: "Height 6 to 7 feet, 34 to 37 inches circumference, $50 to $65, according to size or weight."

Tom Domoto made a trip to Japan and was married there on June 29, 1899. He brought his bride to East Oakland and established a home on the nursery grounds. There Toichi was born in 1902, and eventually was joined by two brothers and eight sisters.



Before the 1906 earthquake, this wagon was the market place for many flower growers in the Bay Area, hauling the Domoto Brothers' flowers to San Francisco.

During those years the Domoto brothers were leaders in the cut flower and potted plant business, as attested by two old photographs reproduced for this article. The two photos and the legends are by courtesy of the Magazine of the California State Florist's Association.

About this time the area surrounding the nursery property started to build up with homes and so on November 11, 1902, a month before Toichi was born, the brothers bought forty-eight acres in the Fitchburg district of Oakland, where 78th Avenue and Olive Street meet now. They called this place the "New Ranch." Here they put up twenty-five greenhouses, each 28 feet by 200 feet and raised cut roses and carnations in them. The final move from the nursery on 55th Avenue to the "New Ranch" was made in 1910, when Toichi was eight years old.

Lick Place: The growers of Japanese descent rented space at 31 Lick Place for a market. In the beginning, the Domoto brothers, whose store occupied the corner, subsidized the rent for the growers when the going was rough.

Toichi remembers that during those years the Domoto Bros. Nursery received, via railroad from New York, boxcar loads of English laurels, Grecian laurels or bay trees and boxwoods imported from Holland. These were four to seven feet tall, all trained in pyramids, globes, standards (tree form) and other shapes (including what the trade now calls "poodles"). Each one was grown and shipped in a fancy, painted wooden planter box. "They were the devil to unload from the box cars," he recalls.

Importations of new plants continued and in 1913 they brought in from Japan plants of a double-flowered

264

Hydrangea macrophylla (H. otaksa). Tom Domoto named this form 'Domotoi' and when the brothers exhibited an outdoor bed of it at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915, *H. macrophylla* 'Domotoi' was awarded a gold medal.

Their heavy imports in 1913 and 1914, particularly of plants to be used at the 1915 Exposition, proved to be the last of their kind. First, World War I was the main deterrent, but the clincher proved to be Nursery Stock Plant and Seed Quarantine 37. This law was promulgated shortly after and under the authority of the Plant Quarantine Act of 1912 and stopped all unlimited importations.

Thereafter the Domoto Bros. Nursery imported only limited numbers of camellias, azaleas, chamaecyparis and other materials for propagation. From Japan they continued to bring in quantities of Easter lily bulbs, of a *Lilium giganteum* strain, for forcing. These were shipped in wooden boxes holding from one hundred to three hundred bulbs, depending on bulb size, and were tightly packed in yellow clay. Eventually *L. giganteum* strains replaced *L. candidum* as the forced Easter lily.

Another gold medal exhibit at the Exposition in San Francisco in 1915 was the collection of Kurume azaleas sent by the Japanese nurseryman, Kojiro Akashi. There were thirty plants in a dozen varieties and after the Exposition the Domoto brothers bought some of them. In 1916, they imported their first Kurume azaleas. In 1917, Tom Domoto went to Japan and obtained exclusive sales rights for Kurume azaleas in the United States from the association of growers of these azaleas in Kurume, prefecture of Fukuoka. During the next four years Domoto Bros. Nursery brought in well over ten thousand Kurume azaleas and introduced twenty-five varieties including such well known ones as Pink Pearl, Coral Bells and Cherry Blossom.

In 1917, the year Toichi graduated from Lockwood Grammar School in East Oakland, the nursery bought its first truck, a 1½-ton Denby, with flat, solid-rubber tires. They turned in six horses as down payment! That year the Domoto Bros. Nursery officially became Domoto Bros., Inc., in order to live with the anti-alien Land Law restrictions.

Toichi Domoto graduated in 1921 from the Fremont High School in the Melrose district of Oakland. He went to Stanford University from 1921 to 1923 and graduated in floriculture from the University of Illinois in February, 1926.

Following graduation he continued to work for Domoto Bros., Inc. and in 1927 bought twenty-six acres of land in Hayward, where his nursery is still located today. The same year he built the first lathhouse there.

Now he worked only part-time at Domoto Bros., Inc., in order to have time to start his own nursery. At first he raised mostly camellias and some daphnes, azaleas and tree peonies. He marketed the plants for the next three years through Domoto Bros., Inc. In 1929, Toichi imported named varieties of tree peonies from Japan and France.

For some years now, Domoto Bros., Inc. had been under the pressures of urbanization and was forced to sell part of the nursery property. That and the deep depression following the crash of 1929 contributed to the closing of Domoto Bros., Inc. in 1930.

Toichi Domoto was entirely on his own now and began to sell the plants he raised directly to home gardeners and to nurseries. He branched into specimen plants and in the course of years developed a noted selection of them. That year he sold his first lathhouse-grown camellia cut flowers.

In 1931 he imported named varieties of flowering quince *(Chaenomeles speciosa)* from Japan. His goal in crossing them was to get lower growing plants with flowers that were more double; he also worked for more colors in the contorta form of the flowering quince. In two or three years he had several thousand seedlings started that would bloom in a few more years. Toichi says that, in retrospect, he was not successful in reaching his breeding goals with the flowering quinces.

During 1936 he imported scions of *Camellia reticulata* 'Captain Rawes' from Hillier & Sons, Winchester, England. Almost all died when grafted by the methods he used, so he next imported grafted plants from Hilliers. These were 12 feet to 18 feet high, grafted in various ways, including whip and side grafts. Toichi says that the idea of cleft grafts on heavy understock of camellias, now used so much in California, came from the southern states in the 1940's. In 1936, Toichi named and introduced *Camellia japonica* 'Cho-Cho-San' to the trade.

Also in 1936 he imported all the varieties of yellow tree peony hybrids available from Lemoine in France. The best three of these have been quite popular, especially with flower arrangers. That year and through 1938 he imported a few each of many varieties of *Camellia japonica* and *Camellia sasanqua* from Japan.

The tree peonies he imported from Japan and France in 1929 were well established by now and in 1936 and 1937 he collected and planted quantities of the seeds in open seedbeds. They took up to two years to germinate and stayed another year in the seedbeds. They were planted out in 1939 and 1940, mostly by machine, in long rows in the open field — as there were about 50,000 of them.

It was also in 1940 that he brought in a large collection of named Higo iris from Mr. Wada, a specialist in Japan. The new plants of this improved strain of Japanese iris *(Iris kaempferi,* [illegible] planted out in the fields. During this year and in 1941 he also imported plants of double-flowered gerberas from India and got seeds of the doubles from German, Japanese and southern California specialists. All the resulting seedlings were planted out in spring 1942, next to the plants from India.

By far the biggest event for Toichi Domoto in 1940 was his marriage on August 31 to Alice Okamoto, who was born in Oregon and grew up in Los Angeles. They have one daughter, who is married and lives in Seattle, and one son who is graduating in medicine from Yale this year.

All was going well for Toichi. He was already widely known as a specialist in camellias and his nursery featured the best an dthe latest varieties of camellias, azaleas, rhododendrons, deciduous magnolias, choice conifers and bonsai plants. The flowering quince seedlings from the crosses he had made in the middle 1930's had been coming into bloom for several years and now he selected two, a double red and a double white one, for propagation and introduction. During that year of 1941 he also planted his first greenhouse with big camellia plants for cut flower production (corsage flowers).

Then came Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, and with it great hardship for those of Japanese descent on the Pacific coast. All were evacuated to inland camps in the spring of 1942. Toichi spent the first year in the Merced, California, Assembly Center and in the Amache Relocation Center in Granada, Colorado. Because of his reputation as a camellia specialist, he got a job in 1943 with Schramm's Greenhouses, Crystal Lake, Illinois, where roses, gardenias and camellias were grown under glass for cut flowers. He stayed with Schramm's until the end of the war.

Within one month, in 1943, Tom Domoto died in Granada, Colorado (in October) and Henry Domoto died in Minneapolis (in November).

During the war years Toichi's nur-

sery was taken care of by an employee, Peter Milan, who managed it until Toichi's return. Even though Peter worked full time, with his wife helping, and though he hired extra help off-and-on, he could barely keep the many acres of field-grown stock weeded and watered. Some plants were lost, such as most of the double gerberas and the Higo irises. "I was lucky," Toichi says in all sincerity, "Peter Milan is an honest and wonderful fellow and had my nursery in good shape when I got back."

Toichi returned to his nursery in the spring of 1946. Some of the fifty thousand tree peony seedlings he had planted out in 1939 and 1940 began to bloom that spring. A few stragglers made it in 1947. From this huge population of seedlings Toichi selected the very finest as stockplants for vegetative propagation. That, however, turned out to be a difficult problem and still has not been resolved.

In June, 1946, plant patents No. 700 and No. 701 were granted for the flowering quinces 'Double Red' and 'Double White' that he had selected in 1941 from his thousands of seedlings.

Toichi concentrated on building up his stock with the latest varieties in his major specialties, camellias and azaleas. The great spring feature at the nursery for years have been the tree peonies in bloom. His wide selection of specimen trees and shrubs, especially in varieties not usually available, was further expanded. Also more bonsai plants were acquired.

The years 1945 to 1948 saw the greatest demand for cut camellia flowers used by florists for corsage work. By now Toichi had an excellent crop of them each season in three greenhouses, together covering twenty thousand square feet. He shipped them as "tailored" flowers (each flower was prepared with a collar of fresh camellia leaves, ready to wear), mostly to Chicago. Demand for camellia cut flowers has declined since the late 1940's and is quite low now, Toichi says.

He had been watching a fimbriated sport of *Camellia japonica* 'Mathotiana' for some years and finally decided to introduce it. He named it 'Flowerwood' and in 1951 was granted plant patent No. 1074 for it. Two years later, in 1953, Toichi named and introduced his most famous camellia, 'Shiro Chan,' a near-white sport of 'C. M. Wilson.' In 1959 he named and introduced the fine, large, white variety, 'Ecclefield,' a seedling of *C. japonica* raised by Mrs. Ecclefield of Livingston, California.

In recent years Toichi has gradually limited his retail trade by not advertising and now concentrates on wholesale sales of his plants. He keeps up on the latest in the nursery industry and has held active memberships in professional and horticultural organizations; he has held office in some of them.

Toichi is successfully keeping his hand in the work of selecting and hybridizing. He has again worked up a good block of the double-flowered gerberas and is not only propagating the finest by division, but also by seeds for more and clearer colors.

He grows some camellia seedlings and is now trying to get true miniatures — plants of small stature, with small leaves and small flowers.

His big interest now is the hybridizing and selecting of naturally trailing azaleas, and they look promising. Originally, in the early 1930's he gathered seeds from a plant of *Rhododendron indicum* 'Daikagura.' This plant is better known as *Azalea macrantha* 'Daikagura' (Mme. Butterfly), with rather small single flowers, white, deepening to orangy-salmon at petal edges. Some years later he selected from the resulting seedlings one of trailing habit, but with lavender-purple flowers. This one he crossed with

Continued on Page 89

[Reprint not complete]

266

INDEX -- Lurline Matson Roth

American-Hawaiian Steamship Co., 75, 76
American President Steamship Line, 103

Baldwin, Bill, 94, 97
Bourn, William B. and Agnes, 40, 41, 112, 113, 122, 123, 127
Brackett, Berenice Grant Martin (Mrs. Larry), 48, 50
Brown, Emily (Mrs. Hillyer Brown), 134, 144, 145
Bruce, Florence (Mrs. Starr Bruce), 124
Brundage, Avery, 104

Cate's School, 108, 109
Chamberlain, Edith (Mrs. Selah), 92
Chief of Longview, 42-44, 46, 49, 58
Clark, Cecilia Tobin, 58
Combs, Loulu Long, 42, 44, 46, 47, 59
Coonan, Lurline Roth, 32, 36, 37, 39, 50, 106, 138
Cox, Mrs. Jessie, 59

Diehl, Frances (Mrs. Ambrose), 92
Dollar Steamship Lines, 103
Domoto, Toichi, 119, 120
Duquette, Tony, 140-142

Earhart, Amelia, 34, 35
Edgewood Home, San Francisco, 91, 92
Ets-Hokin, Rose (Mrs. Louis), 97
Eugenides, Eugene, 102, 103

Fergusson, Erna, 61, 74, 77, 81
Filoli
  butler, 114
  cooks, 142
  deer, 120, 138
  Filoli Center, 136
  flower arranging, 115-117
  fruit trees, 122, 123
  garden catalogues, 121, 123
  garden clubs, 134, 135, 144, 145
  gardeners, 100, 101, 112, 113
  Getty Museum, and Filoli, 138, 139

Filoli (continued)
  hedges, 130, 135
  house, 138ff 145
  Indian mounds, 126, 139
  picnics, 124
  public tours, 132, 139
  purchase, by Roths, 38-41
  United Nations lunch, 142, 143
  vegetable gardens, 122, 123
  wartime arrangement, 100, 101
Folger, Mrs. & Mrs. Roy, 55, 91

Grand National Horse Show, Cow Palace, 48, 58, 59

Harris, Mr. & Mrs. Larry, 55
Hawaii, plantation life in Hilo, 8, 9, 11, 85-88
Hayden, Lon, 43, 44, 47, 49, 51
Heil, Walter, 105
Herzstein, Morris, 84
Hillsborough Garden Club, 144, 145
horses
  breeding and training, 45, 46
  and dope, 53-55
  gait, 50, 60
  naming, 56, 57
  the Oakland fire, 44, 47
  Quarter horses, 52, 53, 57
  riding habits, 58
  riding, learning to, 48, 49, 51
  shows, 43, 48, 58, 59
  stablemen, and drinking, 43, 47
  Tennessee Walking horses, 54
  women owners and breeders, 42, 43, 46, 59

Jackling, Daniel & Virginia, 38, 55
Johnson, Peter, 63-65
Josselyn, Marjorie, 114

Kales, Marie, 26

Lapham, Roger, 142, 143
Longworth, Alice, 34
Low, Barbara (Mrs. James L. Low), 11
Low, James Reed, Sr., 9-11, 78

Low, James L., 11
Low, Lillie B. See Matson, Lillie Low
the Lurline, 7, 8, 10, 73-75

McCall, Mrs. William, 59
McCarty, Alfred M., 2
McMahon, Maidie, 26
Madison, Elena (Mrs. Marshall Madison), 94, 95
Matson, Charles P., 6, 62, 63
Matson, Lillie Low, 2, 5, 8ff 29, 32, 34, 44, 45, 65, 66, 74, 75, 77ff 87, 91, 92, 110
Matson, William, 1ff 32, and
  as consul general, 3, 27
  as captain, 4, 20
  at Leeside, 14, 15
  and business, 17, 81, 84, 85
  dreams, 20, 22
  clubs, 21, 22
  houses, 14, 15, 18, 25, 77, 79, 80, 82, 83
  horses, 26, 62, 82, 83
  and the San Francisco earthquake and fire, 77-79
  and debt, 81
  and illness, 21-23, 84
Matson Navigation Company history
  flag, 8, 65, 66
  ships
    Lurline (brig), 7, 8, 10, 73-75
    Enterprise, 8, 70, 72, 75, 76
    William Frederick, 61
    Mission Canal, 61
    Falls of Clyde, 63, 65, 67, 69, 88
    Roderick Dhu, 66, 67, 69, 70
    Santiago, 69
    Hyades, 76
  Waverly Line, 67
  Falls Line, 67
  cruising, 72, 73, 90
  seasickness remedies, 69
  shuffleboard, 70, 71
  barges and scows, 61, 71
  World War II, 101, 102
  William P. Roth, 31
    and airline business, 34, 35, 85
Menlo Circus Club, 55, 56
Menzies, Lolly, 50, 141
Mills, Susan (Mrs. Cyrus Mills), 15, 16
Moffitt, Herbert C., 15, 55
Moore, Mrs. Paul, 59
Moriconi,Louis, 113, 121
Morrison, Stan, 48
Mountain Storm, 56

Onassis, Aristotle, 103, 103
Osborn, Hadley, 128ff 139

Peixotto, Ernest, 129
Polk, Willis, 129
Porter, Bruce, 112, 113, 117, 118, 128, 129, 131

Red Cross, in San Francisco, World II, 92-99
  Camp and Hospital, 92, 93
  cookie ladies, 93, 94, 97
  funding, 95, 99
  Hilo Hattie, 94
Rock, Charles, 61-63, 83
Roth, Jessica, 50
Roth, Lurline Matson
  birth, 1
  trips to the Islands as a child, 13, 14, 86-90
  at Leeside, 14-17, 23, 24
  art and music lessons, 16, 28, 29
  and Matson business, 17, 81, 84, 85
  marriage and children, 30-37, 107-111
  in Woodside, 37-41
  and horses, 42-60, 99, 100
  Red Cross work, 92-99
  De Young Museum work, 104, 105
  See Matson Navigation Company history, horses, Filoli
Roth, William Matson, 32, 36, 76, 77, 107-111
Roth, William P., 30ff 41, 44, 49, 60, 85, 104, 111

San Francisco
  earthquake and fire, 77ff 82
  Fine Arts Museum, 104, 105
    Brundage Collection, 104
  stables,
    Kelly's, 77, 78
    Lawson's, 21, 26
San Francisco General Hospital, auxiliary, 105, 106
Schilling, Rudolph and Alexandra, 55, 145
Scott, Jean, 60
Spalding, Berenice Roth (Mrs. Charles Spalding), 32, 36, 47, 141
the Spreckels, Claus and sons, 5, 7
  the Lurline, 7
Sterling, Wallace, 136, 137
Sweetheart on Parade, 44, 46
Swinerton, Alfred, 36
Swinterton, Jane (Mrs. Alfred), 26

Tenney, Edward D., 31, 64
Thiringer, Leslie, 121, 122
Thompson, Alice (Mrs. Frank Thompson), 33, 60

United Nations. See Filoli

Van Sindren, Mrs. Adrian, 59
Vincent, Billy, 40, 139

Walter, Clarence, 56
White, Ian, 105
Why Worry Farm, 37, 38, 45, 59
Woodside Trail Club, 40, 55, 56
Woodside-Atherton Garden Club, 134, 135, 144, 145
Worden, William L., 64, 71
Worn, Isabella, 112, 114-120, 134, 140

Yuill-Thornton, Alex, 129

the Zabriskies, 65

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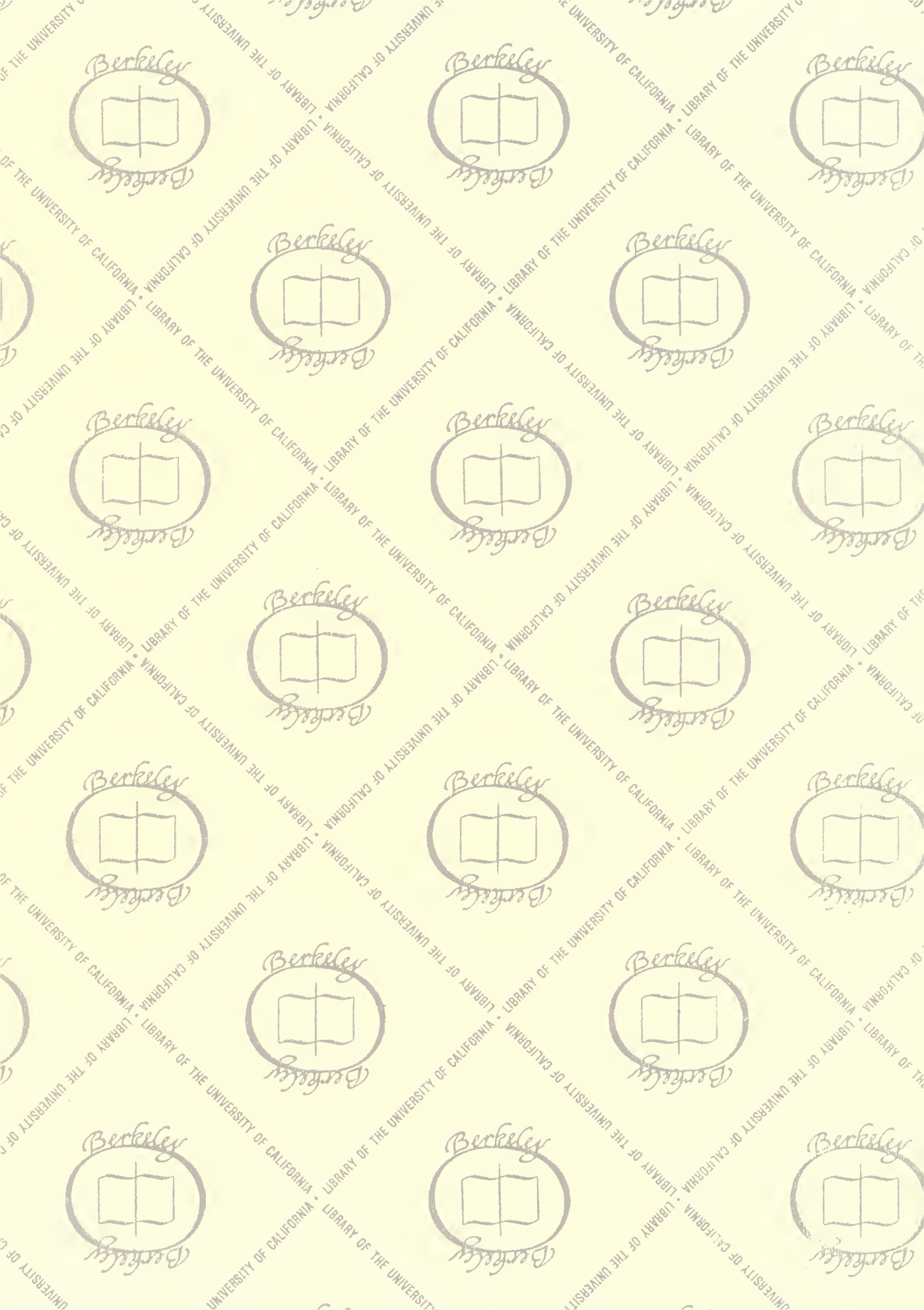
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